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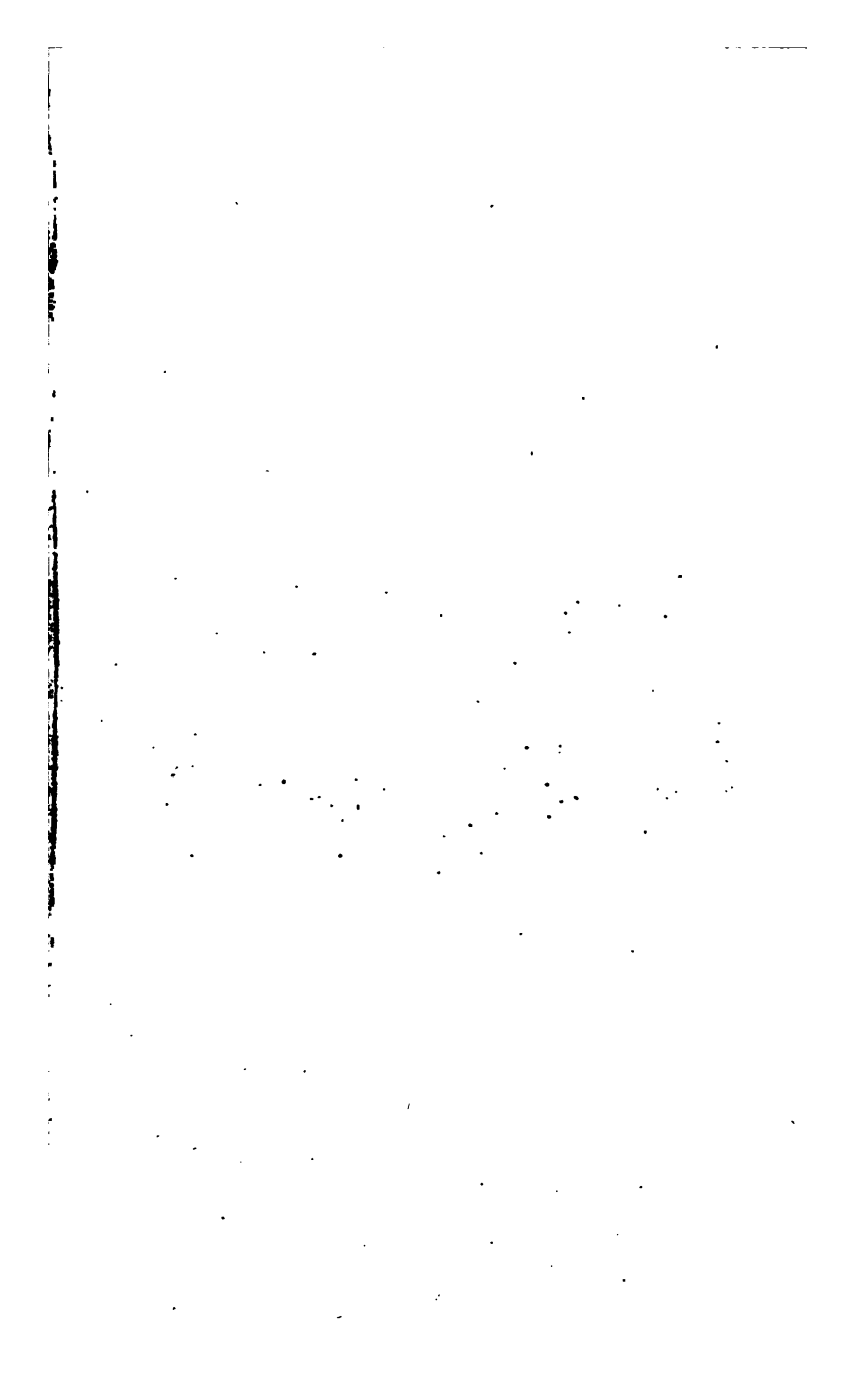




Catherine Amesley

To the Bodleian Library,  
Nov<sup>r</sup>. 26, 1912, E. J. Dodgson.









*Wickliffe*



*Luther*



*Penn*



*Calvin*



*Barter*



*Winchester*



*Whitfield*



*Armihus*



*Wesley*



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ST. LOUIS

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1902

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A  
SKETCH  
OF  
THE DENOMINATIONS  
OF THE  
*CHRISTIAN WORLD;*

WITH  
A PERSUASIVE TO RELIGIOUS MODERATION.

To which is prefixed an Introductory Outline of  
ATHEISM, DEISM, THEOPHILANTHROPISM, JUDAISM, MAHO-  
METANISM, AND CHRISTIANITY.

With an *ESSAY* on Enthusiasm and Superstition, a *PLAN* of the Divine  
Attributes, a *SCHEDULE* of the Sects,

AND A CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE  
Of the leading Events of Ecclesiastical History, from the Birth of Christ  
to the present Time.

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BY JOHN EVANS, A. M.

*Master of a Seminary for a limited Number of Pupils,  
PULLIN'S ROW, ISLINGTON.*

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THE TWELFTH EDITION,

Containing, beside many other Additions and Improvements,  
AN ORIGINAL ACCOUNT OF THE SHAKERS,

*Who neither Marry nor are given in Marriage, but profess to be as the  
Angels in Heaven.*

---

Σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν τὴν ἐνότητα τῷ πνεύματος ἐν τῷ συνδίσμῳ  
τῆς εἰρήνης.

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

*Paul.*

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L O N D O N :

Printed by J. & E. Hodson, Cross-street, Hatton-Garden,  
FOR CROSBY & CO. STATIONERS'-COURT, LUDGATE-HILL,  
And Sold by every Bookseller and Stationer in the United Kingdom.

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1811.

## ATHEISM.

*Invocation to a Storm at Midnight, 1804.*

Gleam—gleam—ethereal fire,  
Rage on in vengeful ire;  
Ye torrents cease to dash  
Nor check the angry flash;  
And you ye thunders dread,  
Burst pealing o'er the bed,  
Where lies the guilty *Atheist* lock'd in sleep,  
And wake the wretch to own a God and weep!\*

\* See *The Interesting Remains of JOSEPH BLACKETT*, consisting of Poems, &c. with a Life, by Mr. Pratt. In two volumes, published for the benefit of an Orphan daughter.

# ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

TWELFTH EDITION.

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AN American gentleman (into whose hands *the Sketch* was put by a worthy relative of mine) kindly presented me with a volume, whence I have obtained certain interesting particulars respecting *the Shakers*. In the United States it is denominated *the Shaker's Bible*—because it contains a full account of their Faith and Practice. There is reason to believe that it is the only copy that has reached this country. The accounts of *the Shakers* hitherto published on this side of the water are very defective. The statement given in this Edition of *the Sketch*, is the only accurate delineation of this most eccentric class of the Christian world.

The volume is closely printed, containing *six hundred and sixty pages!* It is entitled, “The Testimony of Christ’s SECOND APPEARING, containing a General Statement

of all things pertaining to the Faith and Practice of the Church of God in this latter day. Published by order of the Ministry in Union with the Church. Second Edition, corrected and improved. Printed at Albany, 1810. The *Preface* is dated Lebanon Miami-Country State "of Ohio." The Work is neatly written, but fraught with a spirit of mystical obscurity. The characteristic opinions of the Sect are wrapt up in a kind of technical phraseology nearly incomprehensible to plain understandings. It is remarked in the Preface, "As the unlearned cannot comprehend the learning of the learned, unless they are taught by those that are learned, so neither can the learned or unlearned comprehend *the work of God* unless they are taught by those who are *in it*." After an avowal of this sentiment, I expected to find *some things hard to be understood* and there was no disappointment. However I have disentangled some of their leading tenets from that vast mass which constitutes the volume. Their history of Anti-christ is intelligible enough, drawn from MOSHEIM, LARDNER, and ROBINSON'S *Ecclesiastical Researches*, which they pronounce "a very valuable produc-

tion.”\* It is interspersed with shrewd observations as well as with just remarks on bigotry and persecution. In transcribing *extracts* I have exceeded the limits of this work, but should the reader wish for further information—he is referred to my new edition of *the Sequel*, or SECOND volume to the Sketch. In its APPENDIX will be found an interesting *account of their internal Church government*, which is a real curiosity. They practice community of goods, and disclaim every species of intolerance, professing to imitate the primitive Christians in their *harmlessness* and *simplicity*. This principle of *entire religious liberty* having infused itself into the system of these Shakers is like a ray of heaven’s light which penetrates the hardest substances and illumines the darkest regions.

Should the reader peruse *the Sketch* after the order in which it is written, he will find *the Shakers* to be a strange compound of almost all the other sects. They are a kind of religious

\* A few copies of the above *Ecclesiastical Researches*, as well as of *the History of Baptism*, may be had of Mr. T. Wiche, Beech Street, Barbican. A short Biography of R. ROBINSON is prefixed to the latter work, by the *Author of the Sketch*—containing *particulars* which were received from the family.

*Eclectics*—with this most commendable trait, that they are enemies to every sort of coercion in matters of religion. They have chosen what appeared to them to be good out of every Denomination, but there may be reason to question the soundness of their judgment. Never before was there a people so singularly characterised—so unnaturally embodied. Warmth of feeling has been known to ascend in devotion, and then sink into sensuality. But here are a people who profess such a height of spiritual mindedness, that they renounce the common passions of our nature. They recommend and sanction a practice which, were it universally followed, would convert the world into a desert! Their religion is a kind of *Upas tree* which suffers nothing to vegetate within its circumference. But I must check my pen—it is my province to state “things as they are,” not to reason upon them.

It is curious, that THE SHAKER unites with the *Quakers* in an entire submission to the spirit, and in the rejection of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper—with the *Calvinists* and *Methodists* in laying great stress on conversion—with the *Arminians* in rejecting election and reprobation, as well as the

imputation of Adam's guilt to his posterity—with the *Unitarians* in exploding a Trinity of three persons in one God, together with the satisfaction of Christ—with the *Roman Catholics* in contending for the continuation of miracles in the Church—with the *San-demanians* in practising a sort of community of goods, and having no persons regularly educated for the ministry—with the *followers of Joanna Southcott*, in believing that a woman is the instrument to bring on the glory of the latter day—with the *Moravians* and *Methodists* in encouraging missionary undertakings—with the *Swedenborgians* in denying the resurrection of the body, and asserting that the day of judgment is past—with the *Jumpers* in dancing and shouting during divine worship; and lastly, with the *Universalists* in renouncing the eternity of hell torments! Such a mysterious compound the skill of the moral chemist cannot easily analyse. But to this heterogenous mass they have added a tenet hitherto unthought of, unacknowledged by any body of Christians. The Catholics indeed led the way in enjoining the *celibacy* of the clergy, and in the institution of *monachism*. It was left to the *Shakers* to perfect this abominable scheme,

and thus expose it to the derision of the world! The account I have given of this most singular of all sects is replete with instruction; for it teaches the professors of Christianity this MOST IMPORTANT LESSON—that in no instance they should give up *the use of Reason* in matters of religion, and on no occasion, conceiving themselves to be *the favourites of heaven*, should they be found deficient in the exercise of an UNIVERSAL GOSPEL CHARITY.

In the present edition there is a newly written account of the *Dunkers*—a curious American Sect originally imported from Germany. All the other Denominations have undergone revisions and improvements, and the reader is referred to an instructive *little Piece* on the Sects, by Mr. Hulbert, of Shrewsbury. Indeed, nothing has been omitted to strengthen and promote that character for *fidelity* which the work hath obtained, and gratifying proofs of which have been lately given in the reference made to it by the learned Dr. Herbert Marsh, *Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge*, and by the respectable Editor of the new Edition of *Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*. Of bigotry, intolerance, and per-



secution—so much has been said in the *Prefatory Dedication*—in the *Essay on Enthusiasm and Superstition*, and in the concluding *Reflections*, that I shall only add the excellent prayer of Arnobius, to whose good sense and piety Dr. Lardner bears ample testimony.—*Da veniam Rex supreme tuos persequentibus famulos; et quod tuæ benignitatis est proprium, fugientibus ignosce tui nominis et religionis cultum. Non est mirum si ignoraris; majoris est admirationis si sciaris!*

Forgive, Almighty Power! the persecutors of thy servants, and in the peculiar benevolence of thy nature, pardon those men whose unhappiness it is to be strangers to thy name and worship. That they should be ignorant of thy DIVINE NATURE is less the subject of wonder than that any *finite* being should presume to know thee aright!

ISLINGTON, September, 20, 1811.

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## POSTSCRIPT.

THE title of the *Sequel* runs thus—“*The SEQUEL to the Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World; being one hundred*

Testimonies in behalf of Candour, Peace, and Unanimity, by Divines of the Church of England, of the Kirk of Scotland, and among the Protestant Dissenters—to which are prefixed *Two Essays*—the one on the right of *private Judgment* in matters of Religion—the other on the dignity and importance of the *New Commandment*.—The FOURTH Edition—with an APPENDIX containing an account of the internal *Church government* of THE SHAKERS.” The work is embellished with the heads of Tillotson, Clarke, Jortin, Watts, Doddridge, Chandler, Robertson, and Blair, with their Biography. Neither the *Sketch* nor *Sequel* should go abroad alone—they are parts of the same work.—Both are the property of the publishers—I have no interest in their circulation. They were the productions of my *leisure hours*, before I publicly undertook the education of Youth, and are devoted to the interests of *Scriptural Christianity*.

THE  
*FRONTISPIECE*

BIOGRAPHICALLY ILLUSTRATED.

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JOHN WICKLIFFE was born in the North of England about the year 1324, and educated at Oxford. He was the first person in this country who openly condemned the errors and corruptions of Popery. The Monks at the University excited his indignation: but the Pope taking their part against him, he was obliged to withdraw into the country. His place of retirement was Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, and *part* of his *pulpit* may be seen standing at this day. Here he continued his opposition to the Romish Church; but had he not been patronized by the Duke of Lancaster, he must have fallen a victim to his fidelity. He died peaceably in his bed at Lutterworth, in 1384, leaving behind him many followers. The chief of his works is entitled *Triologus*, being a dialogue with three speakers—*Truth*, a *Lie*, and *Wisdom*! He wrote several things both in Latin and English, but this is almost the only work which was printed. Agreeable to a decree of the Council of Constance, held in 1416, his bones were dug up and burnt, his books forbidden, and his memory branded with heresy. But these fulminations served only to promote the glorious cause which Wickliffe had espoused; and he has ob-

tained this honourable title, *the Morning Star of the Reformation!*

MARTIN LUTHER, born 1483, at Isleben, a town of Saxony, in Germany. He was of the order of the Augustinian Monks. His learning was considerable, and his spirit unconquerable. Indulgences being sold by Leo X. in order to obtain money for the building of St. Peter's at Rome, Luther set his face against a measure so inimical to the interests of virtue and piety. An alarm therefore being sounded—the Romish Church was shaken to its foundation, and these convulsive throes terminated in the REFORMATION. But, like Wickliffe, the Reformer would have failed in his attempt, had not some of the German princes (particularly Frederick of Saxony) taken him under their protection. After having written many books, and exerted himself with a wonderful intrepidity, Luther died in the year 1546, lamented by his followers, and revered by the Protestant world. His temper, it must be confessed, was violent, but the times seem to have required such a disposition. He, indeed, appears to have been raised up by Providence for that stupendous work which he accomplished.

JOHN CALVIN was born at Noyon, in Picardy, 1509. Discovering early marks of piety, his father designed him for the church, and accordingly he was soon presented to a living near Noyon, the place of his nativity. He, however, conceiving a dislike to the corruptions of Popery, quitted the Church, and turned his attention to the law. Visiting Paris, he made himself known to those who had privately embraced the Reformation. But a persecution arising against the Reformers, he went to Basil, where he published his famous work, *Institutions of the Chri-*

*tian Religion*, which spread abroad his fame, though, it is said, he was then desirous of living in obscurity. Not long after this he became Minister and Professor of Divinity at Geneva. In this department he acquitted himself with ability, and was indefatigable in promoting the Reformation. He died in the year 1564, continuing to discharge the duties of his station to the last, with his usual fidelity. His burning Servetus, a Spanish physician, for writing against the doctrine of the Trinity, leaves an indelible stain on his memory.

JAMES ARMINIUS, founder of the sect of the Arminians, was born at Oude-Water in Holland, in 1560, educated at the university of Leyden, and finished his studies at Geneva. He was ordained minister at Amsterdam, 1588, where his sermons were admired for their learning and solidity. Being appointed to defend the doctrine of Predestination, he, upon examining the subject, found himself under the necessity of relinquishing the doctrine, and of embracing the opposite opinion. This raised a clamour against him, but his integrity was unimpeachable. In 1603 Arminius was made professor of Divinity at Leyden, and in 1607 he wrote an excellent letter to the Ambassador of the Elector Palatine, vindicating his opposition to Predestination and his opinions on other controverted topics. These contests however shortened his days, though he lived long enough to expose the slander of his enemies. He died 1609, not having reached the *fiftieth* year of his age. He was distinguished for the evenness of his temper and the mildness of his manners. The celebrated Grotius wrote a poem on his death which had this remarkable line, "**DAMNATUS ALIIS, IPSE NEMINEM DAMNAT**"—*Condemned*

by others, he condemned no man ! Other tokens of respect both private and public were paid to his memory.

RICHARD BAXTER was born at Rowton, in Shropshire, 1615, and falling into the hands of ignorant schoolmasters, he enjoyed not the advantage of a regular education. Taking orders of the Bishop of Winchester, he became Minister of Kidderminster, where an uncommon success attended his ministry ; but the civil wars which broke out soon after his settlement at this place, interrupted his labours.—Upon the restoration of Charles the Second, he refused the Bishopric of Worcester, asking, indeed, for no favour but that of remaining at his beloved Kidderminster, which was denied him ! Upon the fatal Bartholomew act, he was silenced, with a large number of clergy, for refusing to conform to the Church of England. He suffered vexatious persecutions, on account of his religious opinions, with a firmness which did honour to his piety. He was even tried before that barbarian *Jefferies*, who condemned him to a long and tedious imprisonment. His publications were numerous for his *Practical Works* make four volumes in folio. Bishop Burnet says, that “ he was his whole life long, a man of great zeal and much simplicity.”

WILLIAM PENN was born in London, 1644 ; he was the son of Amiral Penn, who was greatly offended with him for joining the Quakers ; but, previous to his death he became reconciled to him. He suffered much on account of his sentiments, but adhered to them with steadfastness. His famous book, *No Cross, No Crown*, was written during his confinement in the Tower of London.-- He lived much of his time in Sussex, and accompanied George Fox and Robert Barclay, on a mission to Holland

and Germany. In 1681, Charles the Second, in lieu of arrears due to his father, granted him a province in North America, since called after him *Pennsylvania*. Thither he went, and gave just and wise laws to his new settlement. To his honour be it noticed, that in his legislative code, the sacred rights of conscience were left free and unfettered. In 1718, he died near Beaconsfield of a gradual decay, occasioned by apoplectic fits. His works are comprised in six volumes octavo, and are in high esteem with the society to which he belonged; the first volume *contains* the particulars of his Biography.

GEORGE WHITFIELD (founder of the Calvinist Methodists) was born at Gloucester, 1714, where he received the usual school education, and then became Servitor of Pembroke College, Oxford. Having been ordained at the age of 21, he applied indefatigably to the duties of the ministry. The churches being shut against him, he preached to immense multitudes in the open fields; for which he was fitted by his powerful elocution. He however built two large places of worship in the metropolis for himself and followers, *the Tabernacle*, Moorfields, and *the Chapel*, Tottenham-court Road:—He several times visited the continent of America, where he closed his eyes in the year 1770, not far from Boston, in New England. He died of an asthma, brought on by excessive preaching. His works, are made up of sermons and letters, but it was from the pulpit, that he shone; thence he made extraordinary impressions.

JOHN WESLEY (founder of the Arminian Methodists) was born at Epworth, 1703, educated at the Charter-house, and in 1716 elected to Christ Church, Oxford. He however, in 1726, was chosen fellow of Lincoln Col-

lege, where the first Methodist society was instituted. Like his associate, Mr. Whitfield, being excluded the churches, he preached in the open air, and visited America, as well as the West India Islands. He built a handsome chapel in the City Road, opposite to Bunhill Fields: and in the ground adjoining he lies interred under a neat tomb, with an inscription of some length, to his memory. He died at a very advanced age, in 1791, after a short illness, regretted by his extensive connections.—His works are said to amount to *thirty-two* octavo volumes, but many of these are *compilations*, which he thought were favourable to the diffusion of knowledge among mankind.

ELHANAN WINCHESTER (a popular preacher of the doctrine of universal restoration) was born at Brooklyn, Massachusetts, North America, 1751, but did not enjoy the advantages of an academical education. He was originally a minister among the Calvinistic Baptists, by whom he was caressed, till he embraced the universal doctrine, when he stood as it were alone, and preached it with astonishing success. He came over to England about the year 1787, where he delivered a *Series of Lectures on the Prophecies remaining to be fulfilled*, which he afterwards published. This indeed, and his *Dialogues on Restoration*, a new edition of which has been published by Mr. Vidler, are his principal publications. In the year 1794 he quitted England, leaving behind him a numerous congregation meeting in Parliament-court, Bishopgate-street, which is still in a flourishing condition. He died at Hartford, in New England, 1797; where the public prints bore testimony to his zeal and integrity.



# **PREFATORY DEDICATION**

**TO THE TWELFTH EDITION.**

---

**TO**

**JOHN BRENT, Esq.**

*Elliot Place, Blackheath.*

**DEAR SIR,**

**Y**OU had nearly attained to *the assigned age* of man when this little work was submitted to your inspection, and published under your patronage. And yet you have lived to see it enter its *twelfth* Edition after a sale of upwards of *fifty thousand copies*! Indeed the number sold in the given time has exceeded that of almost every other publication in the religious world. A few particulars respecting the *Origin* and *Progress*—the *Design* and *Success* of the **SKETCH** will be gratifying to your curiosity.

## **ORIGIN.**

Entering at an early age the Academy at Bristol, conducted by my much respected relative the late **Dr. CALEB EVANS**,\* I was imperfectly acquainted

\* He died at Bristol after an illness borne with exemplary resignation, August 4, 1791, in the *fifty-fourth* year of his age. The line of Horace which with the alteration

with the Christian World. I felt the want of an *Epitome* of the several tenets as preparatory to the study of Theology. For this purpose a fellow student recommended me Dr. Gills' Body of Divinity, in three volumes quarto, which I read through with patient industry. His delineation of the divine Attributes and his enumeration of the claims of Jesus to the Messiahship, left an impression on my mind. But the leading opinions of different Sects were to me still involved in obscurity. I afterwards obtained a knowledge of the several opinions as I was able from controversial treatises and disputative conversations. There was however an indistinctness remained which a brief *Guide* would have dissipated. At Aberdeen, whither I went in 1787, and at Edinburgh, where I passed the winter of 1790—it was my lot to associate with religious individuals of very opposite descriptions. These intercourses enlarged my views, and I became better acquainted with the sentiments by which the Sects are distinguished. Still I had no idea whatever, of

of one word he applied to his venerable and beloved father the *Rev. Hugh Evans*, upon his decease in 1781, is equally applicable to his own dissolution—

*Multis ille bonis febilis occidit!*

How did the good—the virtuous mourn

And pour their sorrows o'er his urn!

Both *Father* and *Son* were men of good sense, of ardent piety, and of inflexible integrity.

*Be this paragraph sacred to their memory.*

supplying the deficiency myself. But soon after my settlement in London, in the year 1791, I happened to fall in company with a pious gentleman who appeared very ignorant of the tenets of the different Denominations, though at the same time he expressed doubts of their salvation. This union of ignorance and bigotry (no uncommon thing) induced me to explain to the gentleman the differences subsisting among religious professors, and to shew that these differences were not incompatible with their final happiness. An intelligent friend present, advised me to put my sentiments into writing.\* This I did the same evening. I described the tenets of *Trinitarian, Arian, and Socinian*—of *Calvinist, Arminian, and Baxterian*, subjoining a few reflections in favour of candour and charity—entitling the whole—*Five Minutes Advice to an Uncharitable Christian!* Hence arose THE SKETCH of the *Denominations of the Christian World*. This statement is made merely to shew how much some *general outline* was for years wanted by myself, and no doubt it would have been equally acceptable to almost every youthful professor of Christianity.

#### ITS PROGRESS.

The first Edition was speedily disposed of, and letters poured in upon me, approving both of the plan and execution. Among other flattering testi-

\* Mr. William Tilford, of Union Street, Spitalfields.

monies a note from the late worthy Bishop of London expressed his hearty concurrence and sincere wishes for the diffusion of Christian moderation amongst the professors of Christianity. But the testimonies of approbation were accompanied with a wish that the *next* edition should be extended. To this enlargement I tardily consented.—The fact was—I knew that I was treading on delicate ground. I had endeavoured to do every Denomination justice—but soon found that many sects are not agreed respecting their own opinions. Individuals of the same party furnish contradictory accounts. In every case of this kind I have noticed the variety. It is wonderful what an eagerness there is in most sects to persuade the world that there is *unanimity* of sentiment amongst them. Whereas, Dr. Samuel Clarke justly says—“ though unity be good, yet it is by no means desirable there should be either *Unity of Opinion* in the bond of Ignorance, or *Unity of Profession* in the bond of Hypocrisy.”

Upon sitting down, Sir, to this work, a close inspection of the discordant materials almost deterred me from proceeding with the task I had assigned myself; upon the candour of the public I relied, and have not been disappointed. The most respectable literary journals of the day were pleased to sanction the undertaking. Testimonies of approbation also were communicated from pious and sensible clergymen of the Established Church, as well as from

the more liberal ministers of the three denominations among the Protestant Dissenters. Socrates used to say, that the statuary found his *figure* in the block of marble, and striking off the superfluous parts—the *form* gradually rose to view! I have endeavoured in a similar manner to divest the religious Denominations of the extraneous matter attached to them either by injudicious friends or by avowed enemies—holding them up in their just and regular proportions! Mine has been a *humble* though laborious province—the concurrence of the wise and good even from opposite sects has proved an abundant reward.

After all the enlargements, Sir, which every edition has received, this volume is still a *Sketch*—an elaborate delineation must not be expected. *Μεγα Βιβλίον Μεγα Κακόν.*—*A great book is a great evil.* This manual is intended by its brevity for the rising generation, more especially for *the youth* under my tuition, and for *the young people* who attend my ministry. I never imagined myself bound like the ecclesiastical historian to record every fact connected with the rise and progress of sects, or to pourtray the shades of difference by which they are distinguished. The province occupied was rather that of the *Natural Historian*, who classing together the different kinds of the human race, attempts not the vain task of delineating every variation of feature, but holds up those prominent traits of phy-

diognomy which are impressed on mankind throughout the several regions of the globe!

I also indulge a hope, Sir, that when the opinions of the Sects are once thoroughly understood, they will never be made the ground of reproach, hatred and persecution. "If you doubt and deny another man's religion because his opinions differ from your's, remember he has an *equal* right to doubt or deny your's. "Nay, but he is a *Papist*, an *Arminian*, a *Predestinarian*!" All these characters have been supported by men who have done honor to true religion. Names have promoted mischief. And this point has been managed with such dexterity that a SINGLE WORD will now divest the most amiable character of every charm and render him the subject of the most monstrous imputations. All words are innocent and proper in their places. But when the term *Papist*, *Arminian*, *Predestinarian*, &c. are employed for such purposes they will rank among the blackest of crimes. It is probable that no one MURDERER ever did half the mischief that has been done by such a *deadly* abuse of words!"\* These remarks are applicable to the

\* See a sensible and well written pamphlet, entitled, *Liberality of Sentiment and Practice recommended in an Address to a Christian Society lately established*, by Joseph Cooke. Sold by T. Wiche, Beech-street, Barbican; where may be had his other publications, for some of which he was expelled the Wesleyan Connection. Mr. C. died lately at Rochdale, deeply regretted by a large and respectable congregation.

term *Church-man* and *Dissenter*, which are not meant to describe good or bad qualities. They merely designate the party to which certain individuals belong, or the tenets by which they are characterized. *Archbishop Fenelon*, of the Church of Rome, *Bishop Jeremy Taylor*, of the Church of England, and *Richard Baxter* amongst the Protestant Dissenters, were three of the most pious and benevolent divines that ever adorned the religion of Christ.

Of the correctness of my information, Sir, a better proof cannot be adduced than the following curious fact. Every production of the kind that has since appeared, has been indebted to the work—which circumstance some indeed have honourably acknowledged and others as dishonourably concealed. In the *Religious World Displayed*, (three octavo volumes) a very respectable publication, there are to be found paragraphs and even *remarks* of mine, without acknowledgment. As to inferior publications of the kind, whole passages are to be met with, and one entire account of a Sect from the Sketch without any reference to the source whence it was taken. However their authors are heartily welcome to the information, and I only wish that in the next edition, they would *steal* some of my concluding *Reflections* in behalf of Candour and Charity. One of these publications of Northern growth, had indeed the assurance, after plundering the contents of the

*Sketch*, to copy its prefixed portraits—only with this difference—In the *original* the heads are placed in chronological order, whereas in their pirated plate they are put together with an utter want of discrimination. *Calvin* stands before *Luther*—and *Wickliffe* subsequent to both, though he flourished nearly two hundred years before them—whilst poor *Winchester* is thrown back near a century, so as to be made contemporary with *Penn* and *Baxter*! Thus the religious world is turned upside down, and in the true spirit of fanaticism made a Babel of confusion. In more respects than one *honesty* is the best policy.

As to the unparelled circulation of the *Sketch*, this I attribute neither to the merit of its plan nor to the manner of its execution. Its impartiality has been its alone recommendation. Though, perhaps, not altogether free from bias, yet it is no arrogance to declare that in this respect it yields the palm to no other work of a similar description. I have no interest to serve but that of TRUTH. I never have nor ever will be a party-man. I hope I have neither head nor heart for such anti-christian work. The complaint uttered by certain bigots, that the opinions of the author cannot be learnt from *the Sketch*, is a proof that the book is what it ought to be, for assuredly it is the kind of volume I meant to produce. Not that I am without my sentiments—as is known by those that attend my ministry or



are acquainted with my smaller publications. Some indeed are always intruding their *own views*—under the idea that without these views there can be no true religion. But to individuals who thus make *exclusive* pretensions to every thing that is good in the Christian world—the following apposite intreaty of an ingenious writer (for reasoning is out of the question with them) is recommended “Because *half a dozen* grasshoppers under a fern in the field, ring with their importunate chink, while *thousands* of *great cattle* chew the cud and are silent—pray do not imagine that *those* that make the noise are the *only* inhabitants of the field.” As to the petty ebullitions of ignorance and bigotry with which I have been honored in certain party-publications, I shall only remark, that the more *the Sketch* has been attempted to be trodden down by the unhallowed hoof of bigotry—the more like a certain plant has it sprung up and prospered. I could wish *all Sects* (not my own excepted) to have engraven upon their hearts with a pen of adamant the expressions of my favourite DODDRIDGE—than whom no uninspired writer ever drank deeper of the amiable and conciliating spirit of our common Christianity.—“Let us avoid as much as possible a *party spirit*, and not be fond of listing ourselves under the name of this or that man, how wise, how good, how great soever. Neither LUTHER nor CALVIN, nor even PETER nor PAUL were crucified for us.

nor were we baptiz'd into any of their names. Happy is ~~an~~ who being himself an example of yielding so far as he conscientiously can, and of not taking upon him to censure others where he cannot yield to them, shall do *his* part towards cementing in the bonds of holy love all the children of God and the members of CHRIST! How unsuccessful soever his efforts may be amidst that angry and contentious, that ignorant and bigotted crowd who *miscall* themselves CHRISTIANS, or by whatever reproachful and suspicious names his *moderation* may be stigmatised, his DIVINE MASTER will neither fail to consider it in its true light, nor to honour it with proportionable tokens of his acceptance and favour! Love is the first and greatest of his Commandments, and after all the clamour which hath been made about *notions* and *forms*, he who practiseth and teacheth *love* best shall be the *greatest* in the kingdom of Heaven."

## ITS DESIGN.

The purport of this little volume, Sir, is to inspire religious Denominations with respectful sentiments of each other, and to lead them to study the benign ends for which the Gospel of Jesus Christ was promulgated. Being a firm believer in the truth, and having my mind smitten with the excellence of the UNITARIAN RELIGION, I would fain remove any one obstacle which impedes its progress or dimi-

wishes its efficacy. Should this *Manual* bring only *two* Christians of different Denominations to a more just knowledge of each other's tenets, and incline them the more cheerfully to exercise that *charity that thinketh no evil*, it will afford me more satisfaction than the publication of a work of the most pompous nature.

The falsehoods, Sir, which sects have propagated, concerning one another's tenets, are incompatible with *glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to man*. Nothing tends more to arrest the progress and circumscribe the influence of religion than the implacable spirit of bigotry. Its ignorance and folly are inscribed in characters of blood. WOLLASTON, the learned author of *the Religion of Nature delineated*, once asked a bigot, "How many sects there might be in the world?" "Why, (says he) I never considered the question." "Do you think (said Wollaston) there may be a hundred?" "O yes, at least," cried the bigot. "Why then," replied the Christian philosopher, "It is *ninety-nine to one* you are in the wrong!" This anecdote generates modesty of temper, the loveliest ornament of Christianity! HOOKER, the champion of the Church of England, says—"The time will come when a *few words* spoken with meekness, humility, and love, shall be more acceptable than *volumes of controversy*, which commonly destroy

*charity*, the very best part of TRUE RELIGION." And the present BISHOP of LLANDAFF remarks, "There is a something in our COMMON faith in which all are agreed, and that *somewhat* is, in my opinion, a circumstance of such *ineffable importance* that I will never refuse the right hand of fellowship to him who acknowledges its truth; never think or speak of him with disrespect, nor with true pharisaical pride esteem myself more orthodox, more acceptable to my Redeemer than he is, and that *somewhat* is, ETERNAL LIFE—the gift of God through Jesus Christ!" I am however aware, Sir, that for the same reason that the passionate, charge the mild and unassuming with a want of spirit, *zealots* are reproaching the advocates of moderation with indifference. This is a false charge, for liberal characters have been distinguished for their zeal in support of what appeared to them to be the interests of truth. That the candid have fallen into luke warmth, and that the zealous have been betrayed into persecution, cannot be denied; but no man in his senses will maintain that there is an inseparable connection between *candour* and *indifference*, between *zeal* and *persecution*. Against a spirit of indifference I here protest—nor will any person accuse me of it who has read my LETTER to Dr. Hawker on *General Redemption* as the basis of *General Benevolence*. There I have contended

*earnestly, but neither boisterously nor uncharitably, for an important branch of the faith once delivered to the saints.\**

"In Religion every man is attached to the mode of worship and the system of doctrines to which he has been accustomed, and he looks upon other modes and other doctrines as bordering on impiety. This disposition is so general that it may be considered as *natural*, yet, like many other natural propensities, it may be corrected—it is an *evil* which may be over-

\* *A Letter addressed to Robert Hawker, D. D. suggested by his defence of the London Female Penitentiary, SECOND EDITION, with Animadversions on the Eclectic Review.* A very worthy father of a family had his mind overwhelmed by the doctrines of election and reprobation. Life became a burden, and the poor man wished to rid himself of it, when the *above Letter* fell into his hands. His mind was instantly relieved, and he came up out of Sussex near *fifty* miles to make his grateful acknowledgments. Upon his particular request I baptized him, and ever since he is a happy and useful member of the community. And yet it is of this *same Letter* that a certain unprincipled scribbler was pleased to say, "It is a performance which few men who have any reputation for sense or *honesty* will care to acknowledge!!" But why all this WRATH and SCURRILITY? Because I had established *this truth*, which has been since frankly acknowledged by one of their own Preachers—"We cannot reconcile (says Mr. *Stiles*, in his eloquent Sermon on the death of Mr. *Spencer*) the *mercy* of God with the *everlasting* misery which sin inevitably brings upon thousands who are BORN and CONCEIVED in iniquity, and the only ultimate barrier to whose salvation is the NON-VOLITION of the Deity!!"

come by GOOD SENSE. I call it an evil, because it misleads the judgment and subjects men to the tyranny of prejudice. It was a tyranny of this sort which made St. Paul a persecutor of Jesus, which made the Jews persecutors of the Christians, which made the Heathens persecutors of both Jews and Christians, and which has at times rendered the different denominations of Christians in this country, and in all other parts of Christendom, *persecutors of each other*. There can be no question that it is the duty of all men to oppose reason to prejudice, but unluckily *every* man thinks that he does so—he mistakes his *own* conclusions for *truth*, which ought not to be disputed, and which cannot be illustrated; and every argument tending to subvert them is rejected without examination.”—Thus admirably remarks BISHOP WATSON, in one of his *Charges* to his CLERGY—and to correct this general and much to be lamented evil is the object of *the Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World*.

Upon the first appearance of *the Sketch*, Sir, it was suggested that my concluding Reflections in favour of Candour and Charity were of an injurious tendency. One zealot in particular, whispered in my ear, that I had suffered my “good nature” to get the better of my religion. Thus it seems religion is an ill-natured thing, and ill-natured people are its greatest ornament! But certain religionists went another way to work. After reprobating *the*

*Reflections*—they professed themselves to be such “dolts” as not to know what I meant whilst they most charitably imputed the inculcation of liberality of sentiment to my youth! But assuredly there can be no *mystery* in this subject—for as Dr. Aikin in his Letters to his son remarks—When Jesus preached, Prejudice cried, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?—Crucify him, crucify him!* exclaimed Bigotry. *Why what evil hath he done?* remonstrated: Candour, and Liberality drew from his words this inference—*In every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*” However, to shew that neither my want of ill-nature nor my youthful inexperience led to my *Reflections* in favour of Candour and Charity, I immediately collected the sentiments of the best Divines on the subject. This constitutes the *SEQUEL* or *second volume of the Sketch*, which has been already mentioned in the Preface to this Work.†

† It is a fact, that a violent *Antinomian* preacher in the principality of Wales, declaiming against our SAVIOUR’S *Sermon on the Mount*, which is replete with a sublime and exalted morality—told his hearers, that CHRIST delivered it when he was a young man—but knew better afterwards! Zealots would upon the same principle, have the new *Commandment of loving one another* put along with the *Sermon on the Mount*, and thus have them both consigned to oblivion. Into what length of folly, and even impiety, are certain persons led by an ignorant and systematical bigotry.

When Atheists and Deists, both in this country, and on the continent, are assailing the venerable fabric of our religion, its professors ceasing to lay an undue stress on their private opinions, should concentrate their scattered forces, and inspired with mutual kindness, oppose the COMMON ENEMY ! Alas ! to the jaundiced eye of the Unbeliever in the present distracted state of the religious world, the Christian Revelation has few attractions—having the appearance of a vast overgrown bramble, prickly on every side, and threatening those who approach it with pain and injury. Whereas, *the Christianity of the New Testament* resembles the AUTUMNAL TREE covered with its delicious stores, and bending towards the earth with the overflowing richness of the season. It is indeed (as we sometimes behold it hieroglyphically represented) THE TREE OF LIFE, bearing all manner of good fruit for *the healing of the nations !*

#### ITS SUCCESS.

Nor will you, my dear Sir, impute to me an improper vanity, when I mention that *the Sketch* has been translated into the French and German languages—and also recently into the ancient British language for the use of my native principality. It has also been re-published, together with the SEQUEL, at Philadelphia in America. This extension of their sphere of usefulness will I trust, prove the



means of aiding the cause of Christian liberty among our *transatlantic* brethren. The period is approaching when the jealousies and distinctions of party in every quarter of the globe, shall be lost in the diffusion of pure Christianity! In the present awful crisis of infidelity and fanaticism Christians, may be borne down with a spirit of despondency. But the energies of our faith are inexhaustible. Over the attacks of its enemies, and over the imbecillities of its friends, the religion of Jesus shall obtain a complete triumph. The rays of revealed truth which have hitherto beamed upon us, are destined to light up the radiance of a more perfect day!

Neither the abuse of Bolingbroke, nor the subtlety of Hume—neither the ridicule of Voltaire nor the insidiousness of Rousseau—neither the irony of Gibbon nor the coarse ribaldry of Paine, can produce any permanent effect. Indeed, the latter Unbeliever of political notoriety, together with others of his brethren, have of late years lost all decency in their attacks upon revealed religion—and even attempted to raise the “world’s dread laugh” against us. But, “I do not know,” says the learned Warburton, “what panic the present monstrous growth of INFIDELITY may have thrown some of us into. I for my part confide so much in *the goodness of our cause* that I too could be tempted to laugh in my turn, while I think of an old story told us by Herodotus of the Egyptians—He tells us

that at what time their Deity *the Nile* returns into his ancient channel, and the husbandmen have committed *the good seed* to the opening glebe, it was their custom to turn in whole droves of swine, to range, to trample, to root up and destroy at pleasure! And now nothing appeared but desolation, while the ravages of the obscene herd had killed every cheerful hope of future plenty. When on the issue it was seen that all their malice and greediness had effected was only this—that the seed took better root—incorporated more kindly with the soil, and at length shot up into a more luxurious and abundant harvest.”

Indeed, Sir, the flattering reception of this little work, by DENOMINATIONS of *every* description, cannot fail of affording me satisfaction. This circumstance, in conjunction with the extent of its circulation, has raised pleasing sensations in my breast. For it inclines me to hope, that the execrable spirit of bigotry is abating among all parties, and that the professors of Jesus are becoming more intent on the great essentials of Christianity. The probationary condition in which we are placed, powerfully inculcates such a conduct. It was a saying of the pious Richard Baxter, recorded by himself in the *History of his Own Times*—“While we *wrangle here in the dark*, we are dying and passing to that world which will decide *all* our con-

troversies; and the safest passage thither is by *peaceable holiness*.—

Hence jarring sectaries may learn  
 Their real interest to discern  
 That *brother* should not war with *brother*,  
 And worry and devour each other;  
 Shunning division here below,  
 That each in charity may grow,  
 Till joined in Christian fellowship and love,  
*The church on earth shall meet the church above!*

COWPER.

#### ENTHUSIASM AND SUPERSTITION.

With respect, Sir, to my *Essay on Enthusiasm and Superstition*—to you I know it will be acceptable. In the views there delineated we have long ago coincided. Some of my readers may be disappointed because I have not descended into a minute explication of doctrines—but this minuteness would have answered no good end. It would have been taking that decided part, which I have in the present work studiously avoided. Besides it is an eager contention for *peculiarities of faith* that has created such ill blood and done such mischief in the world. Men will speculate and have their private opinions—in this there is no harm. But there is a strange propensity to *idolise* these opinions; and to feel angry when their fellow-Christians do not servilely bow down and embrace them. The ingenious Mr. Seed, (a clergyman) has thus happily illustrated the

sentiment—"Our own particular *darling tenets*, by which we are distinguished from the bulk of Christians, we look upon as our private inclosures, our private walks, in which we have *property* exclusive of others, and which we take care to cultivate, beautify, and fence in against all invaders. To the *received notions*, however IMPORTANT, we are more indifferent, as to common fields and public walks which lie open to every body." This is a great evil—not merely on account of the divisions it creates among Christians, but the sad effects produced on the minds of *Jew* and *Gentile*, who otherwise might have embraced Christianity. With respect to *the Jews* it is thus candidly acknowledged—"Are not the dissensions among Christians, the *unedifying* variances and strifes, and contentions and disputes, the *unlovely keenness* for the PECULIARITIES of a sect, and a *bitterness* against those who differ, to be regarded as things which must have a very unfavourable influence on the mind of a Jew? Were one of that nation to step into our places of worship, would he find none of us, my brethren in the ministry, instead of *peaceably* directing our flock in the way to heaven, railing against others, holding up men of different sentiments, perhaps on unimportant matters, to *ridicule*, *contempt*, or *hatred*, and kindling the souls of the people *into rage* against them? Alas! that he should ever behold so unedifying a sight. And shall we

not consider such a conduct as placing a *stumbling block* in his way?"\* Indeed, we shall do well to bear our testimony against the delirium of Enthusiasm, and against the folly of Superstition wherever they may be found, or by whomsoever they may happen to be cherished. Protestants as well as Papists—Dissenters as well as Churchmen, ought to examine themselves on the subject—*Intra Illicoe peccatur et extra*. The abuses of revelation have formed one of the strongest holds of unbelief. Lord Bolingbroke remarks,—“Let us reason cautiously—pronounce modestly—practice sincerely, and hope humbly. To do this is to be wise and good, and *to be wise and good* is better far than to be a philosopher, a metaphysician, or even a DIVINE!” Had the noble Lord been less observant of the degenerate state of Christians, and better acquainted with the New Testament—he would have expressed himself more correctly. The province of a *Christian Divine* is to teach his flock “to reason cautiously—to pronounce modestly—to practice sincerely, and to hope humbly.” This is *to be wise and good* in the true evangelical sense, for it is the sum and substance of Christianity. When will the Unbeliever learn the nature of true religion from JESUS CHRIST himself, and not from those of his disciples, who retain little or none of the lineaments of the

\* SERMON to the Jews, by D. Bogue, A. M. preached before the Missionary Society.

divine original? The very best Christian is an imperfect mirror--faintly reflecting back the radiance of his SAVIOUR's wisdom and glory.

It has been remarked of Christianity, Sir, that its general representations of a future state is a presumptive proof of its truth--whereas Mahometanism and other false religions abound in minute details. I would apply this observation to doctrinal points on abstruse subjects. It is rashness to decide where sufficient information has not been given. *To be wise above what is written* is the besetting sin of the human mind naturally curious--and made still more so when it has religion for its object, involving the happiness or misery of futurity. In a better world, where we have more light, there will be an entire agreement. It is the region of decision--of harmony, and of love. Let us then form our opinions with care. Let us never set them up as a standard to others who have equal means of acquiring religious truth with ourselves; and whatever opinions we may adopt after the fullest enquiry--whether reputedly orthodox, or reputedly heterodox, let us maintain them with charity. "NEWTON and LOCKE (says Bishop Watson) were esteemed *Soci-nians*--LARDNER was an avowed one--CLARKE and WHISTON were declared *Arians*, BULL and WATERLAND were professed *Athanasians*. Who will take upon him to say that these men were not *equal* to each other in probity and scriptural knowledge?

And if that be admitted, surely we ought to learn no other lesson from this diversity of their opinions, except that of perfect *moderation* and *good will* towards those who happen to differ from ourselves. We ought to entertain no other wish but that every man be allowed without loss of *fame* or *fortune*, *et sentire quæ velit et quæ sentiat dicere*. This *absolute freedom of enquiry*, it is apprehended is the best way of investigating the sense of Scripture, the most probable means of producing an *uniformity* of opinion, and of rendering the gospel dispensation as intelligible to us in the eighteenth century as we presume it was to the Christians in the first century." \*

\* See a very valuable *Collection of Theological Tracts*, in six volumes, by Richard Watson, D. D. F. R. S. Bishop of Landaff, and Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge. The *Apology for Christianity*, also addressed to E. Gibbon, Esq. and likewise the *Apology for the Bible*, in reply to Thomas Paine, are lasting monuments of his erudition and piety. These have been lately published together in a volume, with *two Sermons* and a *Charge* in defence of revealed religion. Some exception was taken to the term *Apology*, but it is strictly accurate and just. In Peter i. 3, 15, where the Apostle exhorts the primitive Christians to be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in them, the original has it ἀπολογία, an APOLOGY for the hope that is in them, and Doddridge has thus rendered it in his Version of the New Testament. Hence the celebrated Pieces which bore this Title, of Justin Martyr and other worthies of the early ages of the

Amidst the contentions of the Christian sects, Sir, it is most pleasing to reflect, that to the attributes of TRUE RELIGION there attaches a kind of immutability. The devout and benevolent man is the same in every denomination. He has a permanent character, whatever be the complexion of his speculative opinions, or whatever be the garb of his outward profession. His faith may indeed be more or less reasonable—and therefore more or less adapted to produce consistency of conduct. But should his views be formed with caution, and his practice be made conformable to those views—God will

Christian Church. The eloquent Apologies of the Bishop of Landaff will render his memory equally dear in the eyes of our Christian posterity. In the present decline of life he might exclaim without the imputation of arrogance or any breach of modesty—

*Hic Victor cæstus artemque repono!* Virgil.  
To younger champions now the fight I yield,  
Here hang my conquering arms, and here renounce  
the field!

The Apostle Paul, with enlarged and liberal views, exults in a noble spirit of Christian triumph, when he declares—  
*I have fought a good fight—I have finished my course—I have kept the faith—henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which shall be given me at that day—and not to me only, but to ALL those who love his appearing.*  
The reader will be gratified to learn that the worthy Bishop of Landaff is quietly passing away the remainder of his active life on his native soil, amidst the wild and romantic scenes of Westmoreland.



bless him, and *man* his weak fallible fellow-creature must not curse him. Rash censure involves its own condemnation. That luminary of the law, *Sir Matthew Hale*, has drawn a portraiture of RELIGION which the leading articles of our Christian belief are sufficient to realise. Nothing was ever more nicely depicted—nothing more accurately adjusted. “RELIGION teacheth and tutors *the soul* to a high reverence and veneration of ALMIGHTY GOD, a sincere and upright walking as in the presence of the invisible and all-seeing God. It makes a MAN truly love to honor and obey him, and therefore careful to know what his will is. It renders the heart highly thankful to him as his *Creator, Redeemer and Benefactor*. It makes a man entirely to depend upon, to seek to him for guidance and direction and protection, to submit to his will with all patience and resignation of soul. It gives the law not only to his words and actions, but to his very thoughts and purposes. It bringeth a man to such a deportment both of external and internal sobriety as may be decent in the presence of God and his holy angels. It crusheth and casts down all pride and haughtiness both in a man’s heart and carriage, and gives him an humble frame of soul and life both in the sight of God and MEN. It regulates and governs the passions of the mind, and brings them into *due moderation*. It gives a man a right estimate of this present world, and sets the heart and hopes afore it.”

—so that he never loves it more than it deserves. It makes the wealth and glory of this world, high places and great preferments, but of low and little value to him, so that he is neither covetous nor ambitious, nor ever solicitous concerning the advantages of it. It brings a man to that frame, that righteousness, justice, honesty and fidelity which is as it were part of his nature—he can sooner die than commit or purpose that which is unjust, dishonest, or unworthy a good man. It makes him value the love of God, peace of conscience, above all the wealth and honours in the world, and be very vigilant to keep it inviolably. Though he be under a due apprehension of the love of God; yet it keeps him humble and watchful, and free from all presumption, so that he dares not under a vain confidence of the indulgence of God commit or purpose the least injury to man. He performs all his duties to God in sincerity, integrity, and constancy—and while on earth his conversation, his hope, his treasure, and the flower of his expectation is in HEAVEN, and he entirely endeavours to walk suitably to such a hope. In a word, it restores *the image of God* unto THE SOUL in righteousness and true holiness!”

I shall enliven this long address to you, Sir, by concluding with a beautiful illustration of *Difference and Agreement*. It was delineated by the elegant pen of Mrs. Barbauld for the improvement of the

Young, and will not on that account be less acceptable to you. "It was SUNDAY MORNING. All the bells were ringing for church, and the streets were filled with people moving in all directions. Here numbers of well dressed people and a long train of charity children were thronging in at the wide doors of a large handsome Church. There a smaller number, almost equally gay in dress, were entering an elegant Meeting House. Up one alley a Roman Catholic Congregation was turning into their retired chapel, every one crossing himself with a finger dipped in holy water as he went in. The opposite of the street was crowded with a train of Quakers, distinguished by their plain and neat attire and sedate aspect, who walked without ceremony into a room as plain as themselves and took their seats, the men on one side and the women on the other, in silence. A spacious building was filled with an overflowing crowd of Methodists, most of them meanly habited, but decent and serious in demeanour, while a small society of Baptists in the neighbourhood, quietly occupied their humble place of assembly. Presently their different services began. The Churches resounded with the solemn organ, and with the indistinct murmurs of a large body of people following the minister in responsive prayers. From the Meetings were heard the slow Psalm and the single voice of the leader of their devotions. The Roman Catholic Chapel was enlivened by strains of music,

the tinkling of a small bell, and a perpetual change of service and ceremonial. A profound silence and unvarying look and posture announced the self-recollection and mental devotion of the *Quakers*.

“ Mr. Ambrose led his son Edwin round all these different assemblies as a spectator. Edwin viewed every thing with great attention, and was often impatient to enquire of his father the meaning of what he saw, but Mr. Ambrose would not suffer him to disturb any of the Congregations even by a whisper. When they had gone through the whole, Edwin found a great number of questions to put to his father, who explained every thing to him in the best manner he could. At length, says Edwin — ‘ But why cannot these people agree to go to the same place and worship God the same way ? ’ ‘ And why should they agree,’ replied his father. ‘ Do not you see that people differ in a hundred other things ? Do they all dress alike, and eat and drink alike, and keep the same hours, and use the same diversions ? ’ ‘ Aye—but those are things in which they have a right to do as they please.’ ‘ And they have a *right* to worship God as they please. It is their *own* business, and it concerns themselves.’ ‘ But has not God ordered *particular* ways of worshipping him ? ’ ‘ He has directed the mind and spirit with which he is to be worshipped, but not the particular form and man-

ner. That is left for every one to chose according as suits his temper and opinions. All these people like their own way best, and why should they leave it for the choice of another? RELIGION is one of the things in which *mankind* were made TO DIFFER.\*

"The several congregations now began to be dismissed, and the street was again overspread with persons of *all the different Sects* going promiscuously to their respective homes. It chanced that a poor man fell down in the street in a fit of apoplexy and lay for dead? His wife and children stood round him crying and lamenting in the bitterest distress. The beholders immediately flocked round, and with looks and expressions of the warmest compassion gave their help. A *Churchman* raised the man from the ground by lifting him under the arms, while the *Dissenter* held his head and wiped his face with his handkerchief. A *Roman Catholic* lady took out her smelling bottle, and assiduously applied it to his nostrils. A *Methodist* ran for a doctor. A *Quaker* supported and comforted the woman, and a *Baptist* took care of the children. Edwin and his father were among the spectators—here (said Mr. Ambrose) is a THING in which *Mankind* were made to AGREE.\*"

It is, my dear Sir, an animating consideration,

\* *Evenings at Home*, in six small volumes an incomparable little work, replete with entertainment and instruction.

that notwithstanding the jarrings and contentions of parties for their opinions and modes of worship which the subsequent pages attempt to pourtray, *the Gospel of Jesus Christ*, undebased by the prejudices, and uncontrouled by the passions of frail humanity, continues to operate like *the great laws of nature*, with a silent but irresistible energy for the renovation of mankind. Pure religion, it has been remarked, disdains the aid of sophistry however splendid, and misrepresentation however ingenious. Her temple admits none but the graceful decorations of Christian charity, and can only be supported by the pillars of Truth—

No meretricious graces to beguile,  
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile;  
From ostentation as from weakness free,  
It stands like the Cerulean Arch you see;  
Majestic in its own simplicity!

May the GOD of PEACE allay the animosities and meliorate the temper of the Christian world! Thus will the wretched remains of bigotry still to be found in some unhappy individuals of *every* party, be lessened and finally destroyed. The *glorious gospel* of the BLESSED GOD wants not any adventitious aid to extend its empire over the human heart. It is of itself sufficient (under the blessing of heaven) to purify our affections, and prepare us for our certain and speedy removal into ETERNITY.

And now my dear Sir, at your advanced age of upwards of *fourscore* years, this is probably the last time I shall have the opportunity of addressing you on this occasion. I have therefore done it at some length, and with freedom. I congratulate you that PROVIDENCE has spared your life to witness the success of a work—in the diffusion of which from your known characteristic love of candour and charity, you were pleased deeply to interest yourself. May your numerous descendants adhere stedfastly to that religion which you have professed and adorned for more than half a century! And may you continue to experience its abundant consolations—raising you by *the good hope through grace* above the fear of death, and rendering your last end—*Peace!*—Farewell, my venerable Sir, till we meet in that luminous sphere of being where neither error nor infirmity will remain to exercise our mutual forbearance, and where the *universality* of Divine Love in the redemption of the human race by JESUS CHRIST, shall be the theme of eternal triumph—expressed in the glorious and long-suspended hallelujahs of the Heavenly world.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours most respectfully,

J. EVANS.

PULLIN'S ROW, ISLINGTON,

October 1st, 1811.





**AN**  
**ESSAY**  
**ON**  
**ENTHUSIASM AND SUPERSTITION.**



# AN ESSAY

ON

## ENTHUSIASM AND SUPERSTITION.

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*Quæ quidem disquisitio et ad animi institutionem pulcherrima et ad moderandam religionem necessaria.*

CICERO de Nat. Deor. l. 1.

He who advocates the sacred cause of Christianity should be particularly averse of fancying that his being religious will atone for his being disagreeable—that his orthodoxy will justify his uncharitableness, or his zeal make up for his indiscretion.

HANNAH MORE.

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**H**OW can any rational being seriously object to the Christian religion? Under what pretext is it that individuals, who pretend to enlarged understandings and benevolent hearts, enroll themselves among the advocates of Infidelity?

These queries will lead us to consider the *unhappy effects of Enthusiasm and Superstition*. Thus by the delineation of false religion, we shall be able to ascertain what is TRUE RELIGION. While the one corrupts the minds of men, the other, *coming down from the father of lights*, invigorates our understandings, purifies our consciences, and prepares us for a blessed immortality.

ENTHUSIASM has been defined a transport of the mind, whereby it fancies itself inspired with some revelation or impulse from heaven. Mr. Locke, whose statements are generally admired for their justness, gives the following description of enthusiasm:

“ In all ages men in whom melancholy has mixed with devotion, or whose conceit of themselves has raised them into an opinion of a great familiarity with God, and a nearer admittance to his favor than is afforded to others, have often flattered themselves with the persuasion of an immediate intercourse with the Deity and frequent communications from the divine spirit. Their minds being thus prepared, whatever *groundless opinion* comes to settle itself strongly upon their fancies is an illumination from the spirit of God. And whatsoever *odd action* they find in themselves a strong inclination to do, that impulse is concluded to be a call or direction from heaven, and must be obeyed. It is a commission from above and they cannot err in executing it. This I take to be properly *enthusiasm*, which, though arising from the conceit of a warm and overheated brain, works, when it once gets a footing, more powerfully on the persuasions and actions of men than either reason or revelation, or both together, men being most forwardly obedient to the impulses they receive from themselves.”

Enthusiasm is, indeed, a certain fervor of mind,

which neither the dictates of reason nor the sober interpretation of revelation will allow. It consists of extacies, slighting human ordinances, and oftentimes neglecting the necessary duties of morality.

Here it will be proper to remark, that there is no enthusiasm in believing that God maintains a communication with the human mind, that he has disclosed his will at various times and on various occasions, calmly illuminating the understanding, and gradually purifying the heart. But when particular thoughts and impressions are directly ascribed to a divine energy, then *enthusiasm* commences, which pretends to trace minutely the operations of God upon the mind, and to distinguish them not only from the exertions of its own rational powers but from all natural sensations.

Enthusiasm is censurable only when it prevails as the counterfeit of true religion. That the mind should be affected with the truths of the gospel is a position which no one can deny. It is to be lamented that we are not more animated in our christian profession. But every thing has its limits; there is a wise, prudent, and scriptural moderation. Nor let this moderation be despised. Without its existence, virtue and piety are annihilated. The former becomes ridiculous whilst the latter degenerates into downright folly.

There is nothing in the world (says Bishop Hall) more wholesome or more necessary for us to learn

than this gracious lesson of *moderation*, without which in very truth a MAN is so far from being a *Christian* that HE IS NOT HIMSELF! This is the centre wherein all, both divine and moral philosophy meet—the rule of life—the governess of manners—the silver string that runs through the pearl chain of all virtues—the very ecliptic line under which reason and religion move without any deviation, and therefore most worthy of our best thoughts, of our most careful observation.”

Enthusiasm will be still further illustrated by specifying its distinguishing properties in the words of the celebrated Dr. James Foster :

“ Enthusiasm is generally arrogant and censorious, confining superior knowledge and eminence in piety to itself alone—uncorrupted religion is always modest and tractable, candid and generous. Enthusiasm can never explain itself, its inward feelings are to reason incomprehensible, and therefore it decries and vilifies REASON which *genuine religion* exalts and cherishes as its principal and most friendly support. Enthusiasm can subsist where morality is wanting—in religion strict and good morals are the most essential and sublime part. Finally, there is no setting bounds to enthusiasm, nor is it possible to guess with any good degree of probability what effects it may happen to produce; but the effects of true religion are ascertained by stated laws, which are of eternal and immutable authority. Religion is

therefore to be depended upon for the regulation and exact order of human life; but enthusiasm can be reduced to no scheme, but like fancy and passion is wild and uncontroled. Let us then be determined by all calm methods to oppose the growth of enthusiasm, for by this means we shall in a great measure disarm infidelity."\*

SUPERSTITION is a term used so indefinitely that it is difficult to ascertain its meaning. From its resemblance to a latin word, signifying *survivor*, it is said that those of the heathens who prayed and sacrificed whole days that their children might *survive* them, were called superstitious. But others tell you that it was not on this account they were so denominated, but because they who survived their parents worshipped their images. Others, again, say that *superstition* consisted in considering the dead as if they were alive. But the common meaning affixed is so different from these, that we must suppose the signification to have an accidental origin. All etymology, is on this subject fanciful, just as the word *pagan* is derived from the latin word *pagus*, a village; because the heathens used to live in villages at a certain period of the Christian history.

\* In *Maltby's Illustrations of the Christian Religion* the subject of the charge of enthusiasm attaching neither to Jesus nor his Apostles, is placed in a masterly point of view. The reader is referred to this volume, because my limits will not suffer me to enter farther into this part of the subject.

But waving its derivation, SUPERSTITION was applied by the ancients to those who entertained mean opinions of the gods, or did foolish things to obtain their favor. Thus, according to a celebrated heathen, the superstitious man is one who having washed his hands and sprinkled himself all around, leaves the temple with a laurel leaf in his mouth, with which he walks about the whole day ! A mistaken idea of the moral attributes of God is at the bottom of all superstition. On this account the Jews considered God as a partial being who had a predilection for their nation, and who preferred external homage to moral purity. The Pharisees were precisely of this description.

Superstition is always used in a bad sense, and the two passages in the New Testament where it does occur, have been deemed mistranslated.—See Acts xvii. 22. *Paul said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too SUPERSTITIOUS*, which Dr. Doddridge has rendered, *I perceive you are too much addicted to the worship of invisible powers*. And again, Acts xxv. 19. *But had certain questions against him of their own SUPERSTITION*, which Dr. Doddridge translates, *Had some questions or debates against him, relating to some niceties of their own religion*.

Superstition has been applied to certain practices in Heathenism, in Judaism, and in Christianity. It always implies a blameable inattention to reason, or



a credulity arising from an indolence of understanding. Hence *Heathenism* is made up of such a jumble of ridiculous practices that it is almost incredible how the enlightened Greeks and the sensible Romans could ever have adopted them. Not only were their Gods multiplied, but their modes of appeasing them are absurd in the extreme. The accidental flight of birds—the palpitation of smoking entrails—the every varying appearances of the atmosphere, were their favourite sources of religious information. Among the *Jews* we have already mentioned the Pharisees, whose practices were so truly contemptible that our Saviour treated them with a just severity. And among *Christians*, in the various ages of the church, what ridiculous practices have been adopted for the promotion of piety !

Scarcely any denomination stands wholly free from the charge. It must, however, be confessed, that some articles of faith and some modes of ritual worship are in themselves more directly calculated to generate superstition ; though after all, much depends on the mind of the individual, on its native strength, or on its acquired information. And in this view of the subject, enthusiasm and superstition are much more nearly allied than may at first be imagined. Hence it has been shrewdly remarked by Dr. Campbell, that IGNORANCE is the mother of *superstition* and *enthusiasm* by different fathers, for the first

she had by fear and the second she had by presumption.

In human nature there is a strange propensity to excess. The appetites and passions with which we are endowed, require to be kept in constant subjection. Of this circumstance the generality of mankind have little conception. Hence that want of caution, and those excesses which have always with wise and good men formed the subject of sincere lamentation.

“ By both enthusiasm and superstition, (says a sensible divine) are the dictates of common sense and the admonitions of conscience alike vilified and neglected. These are merely human, and therefore fallacious guides are superseded in the one, by the most frivolous observances; and, in the other, by the extravagancies of a heated brain. The symptoms of distemper, he adds, are indeed different in the two characters: the superstitious person more resembles *the idiot*, and the enthusiast *the madman*. But as it will be allowed that idiotism and madness are more nearly allied to each other than each is to a *sound mind*, so the two species of false religion now mentioned, however much they may be regarded as extremes, are more nearly connected with one another than either is with that, which alone merits the denomination of the *true religion*.”

I have been thus the more particular in endeavouring to explain to you, both by my own observations

and by extracts from the writings of others, the nature of Enthusiasm and Superstition, because they have been so often blended along with genuine religion. The common enemy has never failed to employ these weapons; and it becomes us to know how to repel the attack. This world is a mixed state of truth and error, of light and darkness, of order and confusion. An imperious necessity is laid upon us to discriminate, otherwise we shall be liable to gross imposition.—*God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind,* 2 Tim. i. 7. This definition of the apostle's stands remote from all extremes; it describes a *calm, rational, yet elevated piety*.

It would be deemed invidious to state what might be easily stated, instances of *Enthusiasm* or of *Superstition* practised in this country and described in the following work; though it is impossible not to remark that *the Shakers*, an American sect, most strikingly exemplify the great Mr. Locke's delineation of *Enthusiasm*—and a very singular illustration of *Superstition* is thus mentioned by a modern traveller. “One morning in a church in the great square at Naples I noticed a well dressed man come in, who crossed himself with more than usual devotion. Soon afterwards he threw himself down on his knees before a crucifix and actually licked the pavement with his tongue! After he had done this some time in one direction he repeated it crossways,

and having thus licked *the shape of a crucifix* rudely upon the pavement, he rose, well assured that he had done a *meritorious* action !”

*The unhappy effects* of ENTHUSIASM and SUPERSTITION on the human mind, are manifold and not easily to be traced in all their evolutions. They would fill a volume. We must content ourselves with a glance at the most prominent effects which are discernible among mankind ; they are as obvious as they are deeply lamented by all true lovers of virtue and piety.

*Enthusiasm* and *Superstition* produce a mean and slavish disposition.

The Supreme Being, considered in the light of a legislator, is an object of our reverence. His laws are guarded by awful sanctions, and their violation excites apprehensions. A fear of offending God is therefore often inculcated in the sacred writings. For, well has it been remarked, that such a fear serves the upright as a guard to their integrity, and the corrupt as a monitor to repentance. But a superstitious fear is neither pleasing to God nor gratifying to man. It has its terrors, because it contemplates the Supreme Being as a tyrannical master, presiding over his creatures as over a band of wretched slaves. Hence, in scripture, Superstition is denominated the *spirit of bondage* ! As every trifle is construed into an intimation from Heaven, so is the mind of the superstitious man always in a

state of fearful uncertainty. The most insignificant causes destroy his repose. Thus an eclipse of the sun, or an uncommon appearance in the sky, has thrown nations into amazement. They have had recourse to omens, and to all the exploded tricks of augury and divination. Hence, every day, nay, every moment, brings along with it its agitations. The poor enslaved individual is thus bowed down to the earth by the illusions of his own imagination. He starts at the shadows which his fancy has created. He is haunted by apprehensions which his ignorance and folly have produced. The soul, deprived of her native energies, and shorn of her original glories, sinks into a pitiable imbecillity.—And are not these effects to be deplored? Can we contemplate them without dropping a tear over such complicated misery?

Enthusiasm also, carried to its extreme, is not less injurious to the minds of mankind. The faculties strained beyond their ordinary tenor become unstrung and lifeless. Borne away by raptures, beyond this *diurnal sphere*, the individuals are unfitted for the ordinary duties of their station. Hence they feel a want of nerve, a deficiency of spirit—the absence of a certain something necessary to the vigorous discharge of duty. Is not Enthusiasm then as mischievous as superstition in its effects—darkening and weakening the mind, undermining the best sources of our consolation?

The primitive Christians were of a joyous as well as of a devout turn of mind. *Being justified by faith*, they had *PEACE with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*. *Believing—they rejoiced with JOY unspeakable and full of glory*.

Enthusiasm and Superstition tend to destroy *love or charity*.

A false religion is cruel and malignant. In its votaries, fond to excess of their peculiar notions, it generates an over-weening opinion of their own understanding. To call in question the dogmas of the enthusiast, or to condemn the practices of the superstitious, is the surest way of exciting their indignation. Your not acquiescing with them is construed into wilful blindness, into a criminal perverseness. To use the words of an acute writer—"Opposition then, is branded with the name of impiety, and contradiction with that of blasphemy. Their own revenge, on the contrary, they dignify with the title of zeal, and malice against the person of an antagonist they call love to his soul." But *this* is diametrically opposite to the doctrines, the precepts, and the institutions of the Gospel.

As to the above picture, are not its lineaments to be realized in the history of the world? Jews, Heathens, and Christians have, in their turns, exhibited these degrading effects of enthusiasm and superstition. How were Jesus Christ and the apostles, in

the first instance, persecuted by the Jewish nation? How were Christians persecuted by the Heathen world? And lastly, how have Christians persecuted each other with a relentless fury? This conduct must be ascribed to a false religion. They *thought* they were *doing God service*. From this single principle, what tragedies have arisen to disgrace the annals of mankind! Hence human sacrifices and holy wars—hence perfidies and massacres—hence private assassinations and public persecutions! And should not these sad effects of enthusiasm and superstition be held up to the abhorrence of all lovers of true religion? *The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the offspring of love and peace. GOD IS LOVE.—Jesus Christ is the PRINCE of PEACE—And the fruits of the spirit are righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

We cannot reprobate too severely the effects of a False Religion, when we perceive them thus overwhelming that illustrious grace of charity. The anathemas of one party against another party—or of individuals of the same party against each other, have injured the interests of virtue and piety by causing the enemy to blaspheme.—Rousseau used to say—so did also Voltaire and Hume,—that the Christian religion taught mankind this one lesson—that of *worrying and destroying each other!* Christians, are ye not ashamed thus to put weapons into the hands of the enemy? Is it thus that JESUS,

must continue to be *wounded in the house of his friends?* Cease to hate and persecute your brethren. Lay aside all strife and evil speaking. Cherish *the UNITY of the spirit in the bond of peace.* Above all things put on *CHARITY, which is the bond of perfectness.*

Finally, Enthusiasm and Superstition produce in their votaries a disorderly wildness and irregularity.

*God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a SOUND MIND.* The divine, whom I have before alluded to, justly remarks,—“that a *sound mind* is here opposed to a frantic or disordered imagination, wherein the light of REASON is obscured, if not extinguished, by the terrors of superstition, or the arrogance of fanaticism. Nor is there any lineament whereby true religion may be more perfectly distinguished from every pretender which falsely assumes her name than this *GOOD SENSE, or soundness of mind*, that gives the finishing to her character.”

The mind occupied by false religion is little inclined either to take up rational sentiments or to adopt rational modes of worship. The dictates of fear and the reveries of a heated imagination are more regarded than the sacred writings. They have recourse to the Bible not so much for information, as to obtain a sanction for what they have supposed to be right in principle and practice. Hence versatility marks their conduct. Hence, camelion-



like, they are exhibiting variety, according to the several objects with which they happen to come in contact. The sobriety of truth has no charms in the eyes of the votaries of enthusiasm and superstition—the simplicity of primitive worship is not sufficiently attractive to receive from them any admiration. Pursued by imaginary fears, or intoxicated by visionary raptures—we look to them in vain for that steadiness of principle and that dignity of conduct which are the offspring of rational Christianity.

The religion of the New Testament is a system of doctrines, precepts, and institutions, together with rewards and punishments. These operate on the mind, not by way of charm or incantation—but through the medium of the UNDERSTANDING we are *made wise unto salvation*. Thus the enlightened Christian has a stronger faith in his religion, and a better ground for continued practice. His enjoyments likewise are more ample, and can boast a greater duration. They run on with a clear and uninterrupted current in their own proper channel. Fear is allied to melancholy—and raptures suit not the infirmity of our present condition. *The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easily to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*

Look then to the pages of Holy Writ. The ex-

ample of JESUS will preserve you from those extremes—enthusiasm and superstition. When **THE DISCIPLES** enthusiastically desired that *fire might be called down to consume the Samaritans*—**HE** turned and rebuked them and said, *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of—for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* When again, our Saviour was passing through a corn field on the Sabbath day, and his disciples plucked a few ears of corn to satisfy their hunger, **THE PHARISEES** superstitiously reproved him for it. But **HE** made a reply full of wisdom—*If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless; for the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day.*

Look also to the *apostle Paul*, brought up in the *straitest sect* of the Pharisees. Upon his conversion to Christianity—his superstitious regards for the partial religion of the Jews were annihilated. He was the instrument of carrying *the tidings of salvation* beyond the confines of Judea, even unto *the uttermost parts of the earth!* As to enthusiasm, he had none of that ignorance, melancholy, and vanity of which it is composed. He with all humility declares that he is *the least of the apostles—and not meet to be called an apostle.* He acknowledges that he is *the chief of sinners*, and prefers benevolence to *faith, and prophecy, and miracles, and*

even to all the gifts with which he could be endowed, well knowing Charity to be “The *soul* of all the rest!” Indeed, the religion of Christ is a spiritual law—a law of rational and manly liberty. Even the two simple and significant rites of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, which have been abused—are to be considered only as means of our religious improvement.

Enthusiasm in its innocent meaning is the warm glow of the heart towards some favourite object. And what more deserving of our attachment than TRUE RELIGION? To acknowledge the existence and perfections of the only true and living God—to recognize the divine mission of the Saviour, and the blessings with which his life, death, and sufferings were attended—to feel the motives which are urged towards sweetness of disposition and purity of heart—to implore the assistance of *the spirit which helpeth our infirmities*—to extend our views beyond the grave, and to realise the hope of a BLESSED IMMORTALITY—*these*, are objects on which our enthusiasm may be allowed to kindle into a vivid flame of benevolence and devotion.

In spreading abroad true religion by exhibiting it in its proper garb—shewing forth its real beauty in our tempers and our lives—here is scope for a divine warmth—here is a sphere for our utmost exertions! There *was* a time when the Christian

world, under the dominion of enthusiasm and superstition, thought the best way of shewing their religion was to arm, and leaving their occupations and families to go and rescue the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem out of the hands of infidels—

————— Straying so far to seek,  
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in heav'n!

MILTON.

There *was* a time when the building of a church, the endowing of an alms-house, or the erection of an hospital, was thought of so much value in the eyes of heaven, that the deed was deemed a sufficient atonement for robbery, cruelty, and murder,—there *was* a time when a mere outward profession, an over-heated zeal, an outrageous fury for proselytism, and a contempt for morality—offering pardon of sin for paltry sums of money, was thought an effectual way of advancing the divine glory. But *these* times are no more. These hated forms of enthusiasm and superstition have vanished with the shades of that dark night of ignorance which once overspread our happy land!\*

\* See the Itinerary of *Archbishop Baldwin* through Wales, 1118, by Giraldus de Barri, translated by Sir Richard Colt Hoare, Bart. F. R. S. F. A. S. This curious work abounds with instances corroborative of the above statement. The sensible reader must feel grateful to God, that he lives in times of greater knowledge and purity.

A degree of ardour is necessary in our worldly profession. The statesman, the merchant, the man of science, provided they reach to eminence, are *enthusiastically* attached to the pursuits by which they are occupied. The poet, the musician, the painter, and the statuary, also, are expected and allowed to indulge an *enthusiastic* ardour in their professions. And for this trait in their characters they are entitled to commendation. CHRISTIANS, fold not your arms together—recline not yourselves on the couch of indolence, when every thing around you admonishes to redoubled activity. No *good thing* shall be withheld from you who WALK UPRIGHTLY. And when you reach HEAVEN, the means of grace which are in this imperfect world so liable to abuse, shall be done away altogether, for the scaffolding will be thrown down when the glorious and divinely beautiful edifice of your SALVATION is completed.



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A

# SKETCH,

&c. &c.

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The great lesson which every sect, and every individual of every sect, ought to learn from the history of the church, is *Moderation*. Want of genuine Moderation towards those who differ from us in religious opinions, seems to be the most unaccountable thing in the world.

*Watson, Bishop of Landaff.*

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**T**HE CHRISTIAN WORLD is divided into denominations, each of which is discriminated by sentiments peculiar to itself. To delineate the nature, point out the foundation, and appreciate the tendency of every individual opinion, would be an endless task. My only design is briefly to enumerate the leading tenets of the several parties which attract our notice, and to make this variety of religious opinions a ground for the exercise of moderation, together with the improvement of other Christian graces. The *moderation* here recommended lies at an equal distance between an indifference to truth and the merciless spirit of uncharitableness. It is a virtue, alas! much talked of, little understood, and less practised.

B

But before we delineate the tenets of the several parties, the *Atheists* and *Deists* shall be just mentioned, two descriptions of persons frequently confounded together; and also a general outline given of *Theophilanthropism* and *Mahometanism*, of *Judaism* and *Christianity*. These topics will form a proper introduction to an account of the *Sects* and *Denominations* of the RELIGIOUS WORLD.

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## ATHEISTS.

THE *Atheist* does not believe in the existence of a God. He attributes surrounding nature and all its astonishing phænomena to chance, or to a fortuitous concourse of atoms. Plato distinguishes *three* sorts of Atheists; such as deny absolutely that there are any Gods; others who allow the existence of the Gods, but deny that they concern themselves with human affairs, and so disbelieve a Providence; and lastly, such as believe in the Gods and a Providence, but think that they are easily appeased, remitting the greatest crimes for the smallest supplication. The first of these, however, are the only Atheists, in the strict and proper sense of the word. The name of *Atheist* is composed of two Greek terms, *a* and *θεος*, signifying *without God*, and in this sense the appellation occurs in the New Testament, Ephes. ii. 12, *With-*

*out God (or Atheists) in the world.* It is to be hoped that *direct* Atheists are few. Some persons indeed question the reality of such a character, and others insist, that pretensions to Atheism have their origin in pride, or are adopted as a cloak for licentiousness. In the seventeenth century, Spinoza, a foreigner, was its noted defender; and Lucilio Vanini, an Italian, of eccentric character, was burnt, 1619, at Toulouse, for his Atheistical tenets. Being pressed to make public acknowledgment of his crime, and to ask pardon of God, the king, and justice, he boldly replied, that he did not believe there was a God; that he never offended the king; and as for justice, he wished it to the devil. He confessed that he was one of the twelve who parted in company from Naples, to spread their doctrines in all parts of Europe. The poor man, however, ought not to have been put to death; confinement is the best remedy for insanity. Lord Bacon, in his *Essays*, justly remarks, that "A little philosophy inclineth a man's mind to Atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion; for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may rest in them and go no farther; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederated and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity."

Archbishop Tillotson, speaking of Atheism, says, "For some ages before the reformation, Atheism

was confined to Italy, and had its chief residence at Rome. All the mention that is of it in the history of those times, the Papists themselves give us, in the lives of their own popes and cardinals, excepting two or three small philosophers, that were retainers to that court. So that this Atheistical humour amongst Christians was the spawn of the gross superstition and corrupt manners of the Romish church and court. And, indeed nothing is more natural than for extremes in Religion to beget one another, like the vibrations of a *pendulum*; which the more violently you swing it one way, the farther it will return the other. But in this last age Atheism has travelled over the Alps and infected France; and now of late it hath crossed the seas and invaded our nation, and hath prevailed to amazement!"

The Sermons preached at Boyle's Lecture—the discourses of Abernethy on the Divine Attributes—and the treatises of Dr. Balguy, are an excellent antidote against Atheistical tenets. This last writer thus forcibly expresses himself on the subject:—

"Of all the false doctrines and foolish opinions which ever infested the mind of man, nothing can possibly equal that of Atheism, which is such a monstrous contradiction to all evidence, to all the powers of understanding, and the dictates of common sense, that it may be well questioned whether any man can really fall into it by a deliberate use of his judgment. All nature so clearly points out,

and so loudly proclaims a Creator of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, that whoever hears not its voice, and sees not its proofs, may well be thought wilfully deaf and obstinately blind. If it be evident, self-evident, to every man of thought, that there can be no effect without a cause, what shall we say of that manifold combination of effects, that series of operations, that system of wonders, which fill the universe; which present themselves to all our perceptions, and strike our minds and our senses on every side? Every faculty, every object of every faculty, demonstrates a *Deity*. The meanest insect we can see, the minutest and most contemptible weed we can tread upon, is really sufficient to confound Atheism, and baffle all its pretensions. How much more that astonishing variety and multiplicity of God's works with which we are continually surrounded! Let any man survey the face of the earth, or lift up his eyes to the firmament; let him consider the nature and instinct of brute animals, and afterwards look into the operations of his own mind: will he presume to say or suppose that all the objects he meets with are nothing more than the result of unaccountable accident and blind chance? Can he possibly conceive that such wonderful order should spring out of confusion; or that such perfect beauty should be ever formed by the fortuitous operations of unconscious, inactive particles of matter? As well, *may* better, and more

easily, might he suppose, that an earthquake might happen to build towns and cities; or the materials carried down by a flood fit themselves up without hands into a regular fleet. For what are towns, cities, or fleets, in comparison of the vast and amazing fabric of the universe! In short, *Atheism* offers such violence to all our faculties, that it seems scarce credible it should ever really find any footing in human understanding."

The arguments for the being of a God are distributed by the learned into two kinds:—1st. Arguments *à priori*, or those taken from the *necessity* of the divine existence;—2d. Arguments *à posteriori*, or those taken from the *works of nature*. Of the latter species of proof the above quotation from Dr. Balguy is a fine illustration. On the former see Dr. Clarke's Essay on the Being of a God, which has been deemed a masterpiece on the subject. The reader is also referred to Dr. Paley's incomparable work on *Natural Theology*, which, though it bears a resemblance to Derham's Physico-theology, is by far more compact and impressive.

Newton, Boyle, Maclaurin, Ray, Durham, Locke, and other philosophers, distinguished for the profundity of their researches, and the extent of their erudition, are to be enrolled amongst the principal advocates for the existence and superintendence of a Deity. On this subject the celebrated Lord

Chesterfield made the following declaration; and no man can suppose *his* understanding to have been clouded with *religious* prejudices: "I have read some of Seed's sermons, and like them very well. But I have neither read, nor intend to read, those which are meant to prove the existence of God; because it seems to me too great a disparagement of that *reason* which he has given us, to require any other proofs of his existence than those which the whole and every part of the creation afford us. If I believe my own existence, I must believe his: it cannot be proved *à priori*, as some have idly attempted to do, and cannot be doubted of *à posteriori*. Cato says very justly—"And that *he is, all nature cries aloud!*" Dr. Priestley's Letters to *Hammon* of Liverpool in confutation of Atheistical tenets deserve well to be consulted—it is a Work of great thought and ability. The name *Hammon* was, it seems fictitious—the Atheist wishing to conceal himself in obscurity.

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## DEISTS.

THE *Deists* believe in a God, but reject a written revelation from him. They are extravagant in their encomiums on natural religion, though they differ much respecting its nature, extent, obligation, and importance. Dr. Clarke, in his treatise

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against Deism, divides them into four classes, according to the less or greater number of articles comprised in their creed. “The *first* are such as pretend to believe the existence of an eternal, infinite, independent intelligent Being; and who to avoid the name of Epicurean Atheists, teach also that this Supreme Being made the world, though at the same time they agree with the Epicureans in this, that they fancy God does not at all concern himself in the government of the world, nor has any regard to, or care of, what is done therein, agreeably to the reasoning of Lucretius, the Epicurean poet—

- ‘ For whatsoe’er’s divine must live at peace,  
In undisturb’d and everlasting ease;
- ‘ Nor care for us, from fears and dangers free,
- ‘ Sufficient to his own felicity.
- ‘ Nought here below, nought in our pow’r it needs,
- ‘ Ne’er smiles at good, nor frowns at wicked deeds.’

“The *second* sort of Deists are those who believe not only the being, but also the providence of God with respect to the *natural* world, but who, not allowing any difference between moral good and evil, deny that God takes any notice of the morally good or evil actions of men, these things depending, as they imagine, on the arbitrary constitution of human laws.



“ A *third* sort of Deists there are, who having right apprehensions concerning the natural attributes of God and his all-governing providence, and some notion of his moral perfections also, yet being prejudiced against the notion of the immortality of the soul, believe that men perish entirely at death, and that one generation shall perpetually succeed another, without any further restoration or renovation of things.

“ A *fourth* and the last sort of Deists are such as believe the existence of a Supreme Being, together with his providence in the government of the world, also all the obligations of natural religion, but so far only as these things are discoverable by the light of nature alone, without believing any divine revelation.” These, the learned author observes, are the only true Deists; but as their principles would naturally lead them to embrace the Christian revelation, he concludes there is now no consistent scheme of Deism in the world. Dr. Clarke then adds these observations, mingled with a just severity: “ The Heathen philosophers, those few of them who taught and lived up to the obligations of natural religion, had indeed a consistent scheme of Deism, as far as it went. But the case is not so now; the same scheme is not any longer consistent with its own principles, it does not now lead men to believe and embrace revelation, as it then taught them to hope for it. Deists in our

days, who reject revelation when offered to them, are not such men as *Socrates* and *Cicero* were; but, under pretence of Deism, it is plain they are generally ridiculers of all that is truly excellent in natural religion itself. Their trivial and vain cavils; their mocking and ridiculing without and before examination; their directing the whole stress of objections against particular customs, or particular and perhaps uncertain opinions or explanations of opinions, without at all considering the main body of religion; their loose, vain, and frothy discourses; and, above all, their vicious and immoral lives shew, plainly and undeniably that they are not real *Deists*, but mere *Atheists*, and consequently not capable to judge of the truth of Christianity. The present Deists are of two sorts only, those who believe, and those who disbelieve in a future state." If a *Theist* (from the Greek *θεός*, God,) be different from a Deist, it is that he has not had revelation proposed to him, and follows therefore the pure light of nature.\*

\* *Paganism* is the corruption of natural religion, and is little else than the worship of idols and false gods. These were either men, as *Jupiter*, *Hercules*, *Bacchus*, &c.; or fictitious persons, as *Victory*, *Fame*, *Fever*, &c.; or beasts, as in *Egypt*, crocodiles, cats, &c.; or, finally, inanimate things, as onions, fire, water, &c. Upon the propagation of Christianity, *Paganism* declined. *Julian the apostate* made an ineffectual attempt to revive it, and it is now de-

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The term *Deist* comes from the Latin word *Deus*, a God; and is applied to the rejecters of revelation, because the existence of a God is the principal article of their belief. The name was first assumed by a number of gentlemen in France and Italy, who were willing to cover their opposition to the Christian revelation by a more honourable name than that of Atheists. Viret, a divine of eminence among the first reformers, appears to have been the first author who expressly mentions them; for in the Epistle Dedicatory prefixed to the second volume of his *Instruction Chretienne*, published in 1563, he speaks of some persons at that time who called themselves by a new name, that of *Deists*. Deists are also often called *Infidels* (from the Latin word *infidelis*), on account of their want of faith or belief in the Christian religion. Some indeed have censured the application of the term *infidelity* to unbelievers, contending that in *our* language it is used solely in a particular sense, implying the want of *conjugal fidelity*.

generated into gross and disgusting idolatry. The chief Sects of Paganism now existing are the *Sabians*, *Magians*, *Hindoos*, and *Chinese*, together with that of the *Grand Lama* of Tartary. Curious specimens of the Pagan idols may be seen in the *British Museum*; and in the *Museum* at the *Baptist Academy*, Bristol. See YOUNG'S *Historical Dissertation on Idolatrous Corruptions in Religion*. Two Volumes.

Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, was the first Deist who excited public notice in this country. Dr. Brown's recent edition of Leland's View of the Deistical writers, (Tindal, Morgan, Chubb, Bolingbroke, &c. &c.) together with many other valuable treatises, afford information concerning their principles, and contain a refutation of their objections against revealed religion. Mr. Belsham has thus assigned the principal causes of modern infidelity in his reply to Mr. Wilberforce: "1. The first and chief is an unwillingness to submit to the restraints of religion, and the dread of a future life, which leads men to overlook evidence, and to magnify objections. 2. The palpable absurdities of creeds generally professed by Christians, which men of sense having confounded with the genuine doctrines of revelation, they have rejected the whole at once, and without enquiry. 3. Impatience and unwillingness to persevere in the laborious task of weighing arguments and examining objections. 4. Fashion has biassed the minds of some young persons of virtuous characters and competent knowledge, to resist revelation, in order to avoid the imputation of singularity, and to escape the ridicule of those with whom they desire to associate. 5. Pride, that they might at an easy rate attain the character of philosophers and superiority to vulgar prejudice. 6. Dwelling upon difficulties only, from which the most rational system is not exempt, and

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by which the most candid, inquisitive, and virtuous minds are sometimes entangled. The mass of mankind, who never think at all, but who admit, without hesitation, 'all that the nurse and the priest have taught,' can never become sceptics. Of course the whole class of unbelievers consist of persons who have thought more or less upon the subject; and as persons of sense seldom discard at once all the principles in which they have been educated, it is not wonderful that many who begin with the highest orthodoxy, pass through different stages of their creed, dropping an article or two every step of their progress, till at last, weary of their labour, and not knowing where to fix, they reject it altogether. This, to a superficial and timid observer, appears to be an objection to freedom of enquiry; for no person beginning to enquire, can or ought to say where he will stop. But the sincere friend to truth will not be discouraged. For without enquiry truth cannot be ascertained, and if the Christian religion shrinks from close examination in this bold and inquisitive age, it must and it ought to fall. But of this issue I have not the smallest apprehension. Genuine Christianity can well bear the fiery trial through which it is now passing, and while the dross and the rubbish are consumed, the pure gold will remain uninjured, and will come forth from the furnace with increased lustre."

Indeed the objections which some Deists have made to revelation, affect not so much the religion of Jesus Christ, laid down in the New Testament, as certain absurd doctrines and ridiculous practices which have been added to it by the weakness and wickedness of mankind. Reiterated accusations therefore of unfairness have been brought against the generality of Deistical writers; and with this palpable injustice Bolingbroke, Voltaire, and Thomas Paine stand particularly charged. Paine's *Age of Reason* has been ably answered by many writers, especially by the present Bishop of Landaff, in his *Apology for the Bible*.

The late Dr. Beattie, in the eloquent conclusion of his Essay on the Immutability of Truth, speaking of Sceptics and Deists, very justly remarks:—  
“Caressed by those who call themselves the great, engrossed by the formalities and fopperies of life, intoxicated with vanity, pampered with adulation, dissipated in the tumult of business, or amidst the vicissitudes of folly, *they* perhaps have little need and little relish for the consolations of religion. But let them know, that in the solitary scenes of life there is many an honest and tender heart pining with incurable anguish, pierced with the sharpest sting of disappointment, bereft of friends, chilled with poverty, racked with disease, scourged by the oppressor, whom nothing but trust in Providence, and the hope of a future retribution, could preserve

from the agonies of despair. And do *they* with sacrilegious hands attempt to violate this last refuge of the miserable, and to rob them of the only comfort that had survived the ravages of misfortune, malice, and tyranny? Did it ever happen that the influence of their tenets disturbed the tranquillity of virtuous retirement, deepened the gloom of human distress, or aggravated the horrors of the grave? Ye traitors to human kind! ye murderers of the human soul! how can ye answer for it to your own hearts? Surely every spark of your generosity is extinguished for ever, if *this* consideration do not awaken in you the keenest remorse."

The rejecters of REVELATION (before they thoughtlessly calumniate it) would do well to consider what they are able to give us in its stead, better calculated to alleviate the distresses, and bind up the bleeding heart of humanity.

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## THEOPHILANTHROPISTS.

THE *Theophilanthropists* are a kind of Deists arisen in France during the revolution. Mr. Thomas Paine figured amongst them for some time, and even delivered a discourse before them on the principles, &c. of this system, which was afterwards established. Since the return of Popery under Buonaparte, they are said to be nearly annihilated;

at least they by no means attract so much of the public attention. The name by which they stand distinguished, is a compound term derived from the Greek, and intimates that they profess to *adore God and love their fellow-creatures*. Their common principle is a belief in the existence, perfections, and providence of God, and in the doctrine of a future life; and their rule of morals is, love to God and good-will to men. Dr. John Walker, a medical gentleman, author of the *Universal Gazetteer*, published the manual of the sect, from which a few particulars shall be extracted.

“The temple, the most worthy of the divinity, in the eyes of the *Theophilanthropists*, is the universe. Abandoned sometimes under the vault of heaven to the contemplation of the beauties of nature, they render its author the homage of adoration and gratitude. They nevertheless have temples erected by the hands of men, in which it is more commodious for them to assemble to listen to lessons concerning his wisdom. Certain moral inscriptions, a simple altar on which they deposit, as a sign of gratitude for the benefits of the Creator, such flowers or fruits as the seasons afford, and a tribune for the lectures and discourses, form the whole of the ornaments of their temples.

“The first inscription placed above the altar, recalls to remembrance the two religious dogmas, which are the foundation of their moral.



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**" First Inscription.**

**" We believe in the existence of a God, in the immortality of the soul.**

**" Second Inscription.**

**" Worship God, cherish your kind, render yourselves useful to your country.**

**" Third Inscription.**

**" Good is every thing which tends to the preservation or the perfection of man.**

**" Evil is every thing which tends to destroy or deteriorate him.**

**" Fourth Inscription.**

**" Children, honour your fathers and mothers: Obey them with affection. Comfort their old age.**

**" Fathers and mothers, instruct your children.**

**" Fifth Inscription.**

**" Wives, regard in your husbands the chiefs of your houses.**

**" Husbands, love your wives, and render yourselves reciprocally happy.**

**" The assembly sits to hear lessons or discourses on morality, principles of religion, of benevolence, and of universal salvation, principles equally remote from the severity of Stoicism and Epicurean indolence. These lectures and discourses are diversified by hymns. Their assemblies are holden on the first day of the week, and on the decades."**  
**Mr. Belsham, in his answer to Mr. Wilberforce, speaking of this new French sect of Deists, remarks**

—“ Its professed principles comprehend the essence of the Christian religion; but not admitting the resurrection of Christ, the *Theophilanthropists* deprive themselves of the only solid ground, on which to build the hope of a future existence.”

The concluding part of the *manual* of the Theophilanthropists being still further explanatory of their tenets and conduct, shall be here introduced: —“ If any one ask you what is the origin of your religion and of your worship, you can answer him thus:—Open the most ancient books which are known, seek there what was the religion, what the worship of the first human beings of which history has preserved the remembrance. There you will see that their religion was what we now call *natural religion*, because it has for its principle even the Author of nature. It is he that has engraven it in the heart of the first human beings, in ours, in that of all the inhabitants of the earth: this religion, which consists in worshipping God and cherishing our kind, is what we express by one single word; that of *Theophilanthropy*. Thus our religion is that of our first parents; it is yours; it is ours; it is the universal religion. As to our worship, it is also that of our first fathers. See even in the most ancient writings, that the exterior signs by which they rendered their homage to the Creator, were of great simplicity. They dressed for him an altar of earth, they offered him, in sign

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of their gratitude and of their submission, some of the productions which they held of his liberal hand. The fathers exhorted their children to virtue; they all encouraged one another under the auspices of the Divinity to the accomplishment of their duties. This simple worship, the sages of all nations have not ceased to profess, and they have transmitted it down to us without interruption.

“ If they yet ask you of whom you hold your mission, answer, We hold it of God himself, who in giving us two arms to aid our kind, has also given us intelligence to mutually enlighten us, and the love of good to bring us together to virtue; of God, who has given experience and wisdom to the aged to guide the young, and authority to fathers to conduct their children.

“ If they are not struck with the force of these reasons, do not farther discuss the subject, and do not engage yourself in controversies, which tend to diminish the love of our neighbours. Our principles are the eternal truth; they will subsist, whatever individuals may support or attack them, and the efforts of the wicked will not even prevail against them. Rest firmly attached to them, without attacking or defending any religious system; and remember, that similar discussions have never produced good, and that they have often tinged

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the earth with the blood of men. Let us lay aside systems, and apply ourselves to doing good. It is the only road to happiness."

The Christian reader will admire the practical tendency of this new species of Deism, but lament the defects by which it stands characterized. It wants the *broad basis* of revelation, which would give permanency to its doctrines, and energy to its precepts, beside the glorious discoveries of immortality! It was hoped at one time that the profession of this system in France would have prepared the way for the reception of pure Christianity.

As to the present state of religion in France, the reader is referred to the *French Catechism* translated by the Rev. D. Bogue. This *Catechism* is drawn up by the order, some say by the pen of Buonaparte, and is taught throughout the French empire. The section entitled a continuation of the *Fourth Commandment*, is particularly worthy of attention. It shews that the present emperor has not only the art of reigning, but of *perpetuating* that reign amongst his subjects.—Superstition is the ally of tyranny.

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JUDAISM.

JUDAISM is the religious doctrines and rites of the *Jews*, who are the descendants of Abraham, a person of eminence, chosen by God, soon after the flood, to preserve the doctrine of the Divine Unity among the idolatrous nations of the earth. A complete system of Judaism is contained in the five books of *Moses*, their great lawgiver, who was raised up to deliver them from their bondage in Egypt, and to conduct them to the possession of Canaan, the promised land. The Jewish economy is so much directed to *temporal* rewards and punishments, that it has been questioned whether the Jews had any knowledge of a future state. This opinion has been defended with vast erudition by Warburton, in his *Divine Legation of Moses*; but it has been controverted by Dr. Sykes, and other authors of respectability. The principal sects among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour, were the *Pharisees*, who placed religion in external ceremony—the *Sadducees*, who were remarkable for their incredulity; and the *Essenes*, who were distinguished by an austere sanctity. Some accounts of these sects will be found in the last volume of Prideaux's *Connection*, in Harwood's *Introduction to the Study of the New Testament*, and in Marsh's improved edition of *Michaelis* recently published.

The *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* are frequently mentioned in the New Testament; and an acquaintance with their principles and practices serves to illustrate many passages in the sacred history. At present the Jews have two sects, the *Caraites*, who admit no rule of religion but the law of Moses, and the *Rabbinists*, who add to the laws the tradition of the Talmud. The dispersion of the Jews took place upon the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the Roman emperor, A. D. 70. The expectation of a Messiah is the distinguished feature of their religious system. The word MESSIAH signifies one *anointed*, or installed into an office by unction. The Jews used to anoint their kings, high-priests, and sometimes prophets, at their entering upon office. Thus Saul, David, Solomon, and Joash, kings of Judah, received the royal unction. Thus also Aaron and his sons received the sacerdotal, and Elisha, the disciple of Elijah, the prophetic unction.

Christians believe that JESUS CHRIST is the Messiah, in whom all the Jewish prophecies are accomplished. The Jews, infatuated with the idea of a *temporal* Messiah, who is to subdue the world, still wait for his appearance. According to Buxtorf, (a professor of Hebrew, and celebrated for rabbinical learning) some of the modern rabbins believe that the Messiah is already come, but that he will not manifest himself on account of the sins of the

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Jews. Others, however, have had recourse to the hypothesis of two Messiahs, who are to succeed each other—one in a state of humiliation and suffering—the other in a state of glory, magnificence, and power. Be it however remembered, that in the New Testament Jesus Christ assures us, in the most explicit terms, that *he* is the Messiah. In John iv. 25, the Samaritan woman says to Jesus, *I know that Messias cometh which is called Christ : when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak to thee am HE.* According to the prediction of Jesus Christ, several impostors would assume the title of Messiah : and accordingly such persons have appeared. An history of "*False Messiahs*" has been written by a Dutchman. Barcochab was the first, who appeared in the time of Adrian ; the second, in 1666, was Sabbethai Levi, who turned Mahometan ; and the last was Rabbi Mordecai, who was talked of in 1682.

The *Talmud* is a collection of the doctrines and morality of the Jews. They have two works that bear this name ; the first is called the Talmud of Jerusalem ; and the other the Talmud of Babylon. The former is shorter and more obscure than that of Babylon, but is of an older date. The Talmud compiled at Babylon the Jews prefer to that of Jerusalem, as it is clearer and more extensive.

The Jewish economy was certainly typical of the Christian dispensation in many important respects, but these types and antitypes have been wretchedly abused. A curious instance of this kind occurred about the time of the reformation. Le Clerc has recorded it; and the perusal of it must create a smile. The story is this: Two eminent Protestants, a Lutheran and a Calvinist, had been wrangling a considerable time about the precedency of their patriarchs, without any seeming advantage; when the one took it in his head to make Luther the *antitype* of Aaron, seeing he was the first who had set up and lighted the grand *candlestick* of the reformation in the tabernacle. The other not being able to disprove the fact, had recourse to the same *typical* reasoning, and affirmed that if Luther was Aaron's *antitype*, upon that score, Calvin was much more so, since it is manifest that if he had not taken the *snuffers* in his hand and snuffed the lamps, the *candlestick* would have given so dim a light, that few people would have been the better for it!

The most remarkable periods in the history of the Jews are, the call of Abraham, the giving of the law by Moses, their establishment in Canaan under Joshua, the building of the Temple by Solomon, the division of the tribes, their captivity in Babylon, their return under Zerubbabel, and the destruction of their city and temple by the Emperor



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Titus. Their books of the Old Testament are the most ancient and authentic records extant. For further information respecting Judaism, many publications may be consulted. See the writings of Josephus, their famous historian, of which there are several translations in our language—Dr. Jennings's two volumes of *Jewish Antiquities*, Dr. Shaw's *Philosophy of Judaism*, and the late Mr. David Levi's *Ceremonies of the Jewish Religion*.

I shall conclude this article of the Jews, with remarking that the late indefatigable Dr. Priestley addressed them some years ago with spirit, and the above Mr. Levi, a learned Jew, replied. An excellent *Address*, however, to the *Jews*, has since come from the same pen, dated Northumberland, America, October 1, 1799. It concludes in the following pointed manner: "I formerly took the liberty to address you, and had the happiness to find you were satisfied that I wrote from the purest motives, and a sincere respect and good-will to your nation. Having then advanced all that I thought necessary for the purpose, I shall not repeat it here. But I cannot help observing, that though one of your nation, a person whom I well know and respect, replied to me, he did not undertake to refute my principal argument, viz. that from *Historical Evidence*. He did not pretend to point out any defect in the arguments that I advanced, for JESUS having wrought real

miracles, for his having died, and having risen from the dead. And if the gospel history of those facts be true, whatever may be objected to Christianity on other accounts, the divine mission will be unquestionable. God would never have suffered any person pretending to have come from him, to impose upon your nation and the whole world in so egregious a manner as Jesus must have done, if he had been an impostor. Would God have raised an impostor to life, after a public execution? And yet in my discourse on that subject, I have shewn that this one fact has the most convincing evidence that any fact of the kind could possibly have. If you attentively consider the character of Jesus, his great simplicity, his piety, his benevolence, and every other virtue, you must be satisfied that he was incapable of imposture. Compare his character and conduct with that of Mahomet, or any other known impostor, and this argument of the internal kind must strike you in a forcible manner. Besides, how was it possible for such a religion as the Christian, preached by persons in low stations, without the advantage of a learned education, to have established itself in the world, opposed as it was by every obstacle that could be thrown in its way, if it had not been supported by truth and the God of truth? The belief of your nation in general, has answered an important purpose in the plan of Divine Pro-

vidence, as nothing else could have given so much satisfaction, that Christianity received no aid from civil government, and that the books of your scriptures are genuine writings, not imposed on the world by Christians. But this great end being now completely answered by the continuance of your incredulity for such a length of time, I hope the time is approaching, when, as the apostle says, Rom. xi. 26, *All Israel will be saved*, an event which will be followed by the conversion of the Gentiles in general. Your restoration cannot fail to convince the world of the truth of your religion; and in those circumstances, your conversion to Christianity cannot fail to draw after it that of the whole world!" In the *Spectator*, No. 495, Addison has given a paper on the history of the *Jews*, written with his accustomed ingenuity and piety. See also a discourse preached on the Conversion of the Jews, by the Rev. D. Bogue, before the Missionary Society. Attempts are now making by the Rev. Mr. Frey, a convert from Judaism—to induce his countrymen to embrace Christianity. He preaches at a large Chapel, usually termed the French Church, in Spital Fields—and is patronised by the London Society. These efforts have hitherto been attended with little success. The reader, however, is referred to their publications—as well as to the following Piece by the Author of this work. *An Address delivered at Worship*

*Street, October 2, 1809, on the Immersion of Mr. Isaac Littleter upon his Conversion to Christianity.* Mr. Littleter had met with a *Discourse* preached by J. Evans, at the opening of a New Chapel at Cranbrook in Kent, on the *Messiahship of Christ*, the perusal of which happily terminated in his profession of the Christian religion.—The Jews will not allow that any of their brethren abandon Judaism but from interested motives—this is illiberal and contrary to fact. Amongst the many Jewish converts, we would hope that they are not *all* chargeable with this gross duplicity, were it merely for the credit of their own nation.

Basnage says, “It is impossible to fix the number of persons this nation is at present composed of. But yet we have reason to believe there are still near three millions who profess this religion, and as their phrase is, are witnesses of the *Unity of God*, in all the nations of the world.”

A *Jew's Hospital*, entitled the *Charity Workhouse*, has lately been erected at Mile End, “for the reception and support of aged men and women, as well as the education and industrious employment of youth of both sexes.” This Institution, which has been liberally and nobly supported by the very respectable family of the *Goldsmids*, is highly creditable to their humanity.

## CHINESE RELIGION.

THE *Chinese* religion is involved in great mystery. Father Amiot, after the most assiduous researches on the subject, comes to this conclusion: "The *Chinese* (says he) are a distinct people who have still preserved the characteristic marks of their first origin; a people whose primitive doctrine will be found, by those who take the trouble of investigating it thoroughly, to agree in its essential part with the doctrine of the chosen people, before Moses, by the command of God himself, had consigned the explanation of it to the sacred records; a people, in a word, whose traditional knowledge, when freed from whatever the ignorance or the superstition of later ages has added to it, may be traced back from age to age, and from epochs to epochs, without interruption, for the space of four thousand years, even to the renewal of the human race by the grandson of Noah." The *King*, or canonical book of the Chinese, every where inculcates the belief of a Supreme Being, the author and preserver of all things. Their great philosopher Confucius, lived about five hundred years before our Saviour's birth, and to this day each town has a place consecrated to his memory. See the late Sir George Staunton's *Embassy*, where much information is given respecting

their religion. Amongst other particulars it is mentioned, that the *Chinese* have no religious establishment. The *Laws of China*, lately published, are well entitled to attention.

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## CHRISTIANITY.

CHRISTIANITY (to which Judaism was introductory) is the last and most entire dispensation of revealed religion with which God hath favoured the human race. It was instituted by Jesus CHRIST, *the Son of God*, who made his appearance in Judea near two thousand years ago. He was born at Bethlehem, brought up at Nazareth, and crucified at Jerusalem. His lineage, birth, life, death, and sufferings, were minutely predicted by a succession of the Jewish prophets, and his religion is now spread over a considerable portion of the globe. The evidences of the Christian religion are comprised under historical testimony, prophecies, miracles, the internal evidence of its doctrines and precepts, and the rapidity of its first propagation among the Jews and the Gentiles. Though thinking Christians have in every age differed widely respecting some of the doctrines of this religion, yet they are fully agreed in the *divinity* of its origin, and in the *benevolence* of its tendency.

Brief representations of the Christian religion,

shall be transcribed both from the writings of Churchmen and Dissenters, well deserving of attention.

Bishop Gibson, in his second Pastoral Letter, observes—"It will appear that the several denominations of Christians agree both in the *substance of religion* and in the necessary *enforcements of the practice* of it: that the world and all things in it were created by God, and are under the direction and government of his all-powerful hand and all-seeing eye; that there is an essential difference between good and evil, virtue and vice; that there will be a state of future rewards and punishments, according to our behaviour in this life; that Christ was a teacher sent from God, and that his apostles were divinely inspired; that all Christians are bound to *declare and profess* themselves to be his disciples; that not only the exercise of the several virtues, but also a belief in Christ is necessary, in order to their obtaining the pardon of sin, the favour of God, and eternal life; that the worship of God is to be performed chiefly by the heart in prayers, praises, and thanksgivings; and as to all other points, that they are bound to live by the rules which Christ and his apostles have left them in the holy scriptures. Here then is a fixed, certain, and uniform rule of faith and practice, *containing all the most necessary points of religion*, established by a divine sanction,

embraced as such by ALL denominations of Christians, and *in itself abundantly sufficient to preserve the knowledge and practice of religion in the world.*"\*

Dr. Sherlock (who succeeded Dr. Gibson as Bishop of London) expresses himself much to the same purpose in the first volume of his Sermons. Observing that the books of the New Testament may be considered as either historical, as doctrinal, or as controversial, and some as a mixture of the two last, he thus proceeds:—"by the doctrinal we understand those matters of faith and rules of duty which do not regard this or that particular faith, but were intended for the use of the world, and are to continue to the end of it. And if there

\* Some curious particulars respecting the religion of the *Hindoo*s in the East Indies, communicated in the *Asiatic Researches*, seem to indicate that it is a corruption of the Christian religion. How far the resemblance holds, the reader of the *Asiatic Researches* must form his judgment. That celebrated work was published under the inspection of the late Sir W. Jones. The reader should also consult Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*, in which performance the author discovers a profound acquaintance with Oriental literature. See, likewise, *Tennant's Recreations*, a work full of curious information on the subject of India, both as to its morals and its religion. Some singular specimens of *Egyptian* antiquities are deposited in the new Gallery of the British Museum, which may still further illustrate the religion of the Eastern nations of the world.



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be a clear law, and clearly expressed in the world, this is the law. Can words more clearly express the honour and worship we are to pay to God, or can more familiar expressions be given in this case than are to be found in the gospel? Is not idolatry clearly condemned in the gospel? Is there any thing relating to divine worship that we yet want instructing in? Are not the duties likewise which we owe to each other made evident and plain; and can there be any dispute about them, except what arises from lust, or avarice, or other self-interest? As to the peculiar benefits of the gospel, are they not declared without obscurity? Can you read the gospel, and doubt whether Christ died for you? Whether God will grant pardon to the penitent, or his assistance to those who ask it? Whether he will reward all such in glory who continue the faithful disciples of his Son? What *other revelation* do we *want* or can we *desire*, in these *great* and *weighty* concerns? or what is there *wanting* to make up a *complete* system of religion."

The immortal Locke also observes—"Whoever would attain to a true knowledge of the Christian religion, in the full and just extent of it, let him study the holy scriptures, especially the *New Testament*, wherein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its

matter." Even Rousseau confessed himself struck with the majesty of the scriptures, the purity of the gospel, and the character of Jesus Christ. See the late Dr. Gerrard's Dissertations on the Internal Evidence of Christianity, and also Dr. Craig's Life of Christ, written with good sense and simplicity.

Many of the serious friends of Christianity are alarmed at the progress of Atheism and Deism both at home and abroad. But let not the friends of truth be discouraged. That *revealed* (as well as natural) religion is encumbered with difficulties, has never been denied; and this trait will, with a considerate mind, be construed into a presumptive proof of its authenticity. "It would be a miracle (says Dr. Watson, the present Bishop of Landaff) greater than any we are instructed to believe, if there remained no difficulties; if a being with but five scanty inlets of knowledge, separated but yesterday from his mother earth, and to-day sinking again into her bosom, could fathom the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of *Him, which is, which was, and which is to come—the Lord God Almighty, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever!* We live in a dissolute but enlightened age: the restraints of our religion are ill suited to the profligacy of our manners; and men are soon induced to believe that system to be false which they wish to find so: that knowledge, moreover, which spurns with contempt the illusions of

fanaticism, and the tyranny of superstition, is often unhappily misemployed in magnifying every little difficulty attending the proof of the truth of Christianity, into an irrefragable argument of its falsehood. The CHRISTIAN RELIGION has nothing to apprehend from the strictest investigation of the most learned of its adversaries; it suffers only from the misconceptions of sciolists and silly pretenders to superior wisdom: a little learning is far more dangerous to the faith of those who possess it than ignorance itself. Some I know affect to believe, that as the restoration of letters was ruinous to the Romish religion, so the farther cultivation of them will be subversive of Christianity itself: of this there is no danger. It may be subversive of the reliques of the church of Rome, by which other churches are still polluted; of persecutions, of anathemas, of ecclesiastical domination over God's heritage, of all the silly out-works which the pride, the superstition, and the knavery of mankind have erected around the citadel of our faith; but the CITADEL itself is founded on a rock, the gates of hell cannot prevail against it—its master-builder is God; its beauty will be found ineffable, and its strength impregnable, when it shall be freed from the frippery of human ornaments, and cleared from the rubbish of human bulwarks.”\*

\* This prelate has published two *Sermons* in defence of

The excellent Dr. Doddridge also thus happily expresses himself on the subject: "The cause of Christianity has greatly gained by debate, and the gospel comes like *fine gold out of the furnace*, which the more it is tried the more it is approved. I own the defenders of the gospel have appeared with very different degrees of ability for the work, nor could it be otherwise amongst such numbers of them; but on the whole, though the patrons of infidelity have been masters of some wit, humour, and address, as well as of a moderate share of learning, and generally of much more than a moderate share of assurance, yet so great is the force of *truth*, that (unless we may except those writers, who have unhappily called for the aid of the civil magistrate in the controversy) I cannot recollect that I have seen any defence of the gospel, which has not on the whole been sufficient to establish it, notwithstanding all the sophistical arguments of its most subtle antagonists. This is an observation which is continually gaining new strength, as *new assaults* are made upon the gospel. And I cannot forbear saying, that as if it were by a kind of *judicial infatuation*, some who have distinguished themselves in the wretched cause of infidelity, have been per-

*Revealed Religion*, together with some Charges well worthy of perusal. His discourse before the London Hospital, May, 1802, contains a popular illustration of the evidences of Christianity.

mitted to fall into such gross misrepresentations, such senseless inconsistencies, and such palpable falsehoods, and in a word, into such various and malignant *superfluity of naughtiness*, that to a wise and pious mind, they must appear like those *venomous creatures*, which are said to carry an antidote in their bowels against their own poison. A virtuous and well-bred Deist must turn away from some pieces of this kind with scorn and abhorrence; and a Christian might almost be tempted to wish that the *books*, with all their scandals about them, might be transmitted to posterity, lest when they come to live, like the writings of some of the ancient heathens, only in those of their learned and pious answerers, it should hardly be credited that ever the *enemies* of the gospel, in such an enlightened age, should be capable of so much impiety and folly."

Finally, to use the words of the late ingenious Mr. Clarke, in his answer to the question, *Why are you a Christian?*—"Not because I was born in a Christian country, and educated in Christian principles; not because I find the illustrious Bacon, Boyle, Locke, Clarke, and Newton, among the professors and defenders of Christianity; nor merely because the system itself is so admirably calculated to mend and exalt human nature, but because the *evidence* accompanying the gospel has convinced me of its truth. The secondary causes

assigned by unbelievers, do not in my judgement, account for the rise, progress, and early triumphs of the Christian religion. Upon the principles of scepticism, I perceive an effect without an adequate cause. I therefore stand acquitted to my own reason, though I continue to believe and profess the religion of Jesus Christ. Arguing from effects to causes, I think I have philosophy on my side. And reduced to a choice of difficulties, I encounter not so many in admitting the miracles ascribed to the Saviour, as in the arbitrary suppositions and conjectures of his enemies.

“ That there once existed such a person as JESUS CHRIST; that he appeared in Judea in the reign of Tiberius; that he taught a system of morals superior to any inculcated in the Jewish schools; that he was crucified at Jerusalem; and that Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor, by whose sentence he was condemned and executed, are *facts* which no one can reasonably call in question. The most inveterate Deists admit them without difficulty. And, indeed, to dispute these facts, would be giving the lie to all history. As well might we deny the existence of Cicero as of a person by the name of Jesus Christ. And with equal propriety might we call in question the orations of the former as the discourses of the latter. We are morally certain that the one entertained the Romans with his eloquence, and that the other enlightened the Jews with his wisdom. But

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it is unnecessary to labour these points, because they are generally conceded. They who affect to despise the Evangelists and Apostles, profess to reverence Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny. And these eminent Romans bear testimony to several particulars which relate to the person of Jesus Christ, his influence as the founder of a sect, and his crucifixion. From a deference to human authority, all therefore acknowledge that the Christian religion derived its name from Jesus Christ. And many are so just to its merits, as to admit that he taught better than Confucius, and practised better than Socrates or Plato. But I confess my creed embraces many more articles. I believe that Jesus Christ was not only a teacher of virtue, but that he had a *special commission* to teach. I believe that his doctrines are not the works of human reason, but of divine communication to mankind. I believe that he was authorized by God to proclaim forgiveness to the penitent, and to reveal a state of immortal glory and blessedness to those who fear God and work righteousness. I believe, in short, the whole Evangelical history, and of consequence the *divine original* of Christianity, and the sacred authority of the Gospel. Others may reject these things as the fictions of humour, art, or policy ; but I assent to them from a full conviction of their truth. The objections of infidelity have often shocked my feelings, but have never yet shaken my faith.

“ To come then to the question—WHY ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN? I answer, because the CHRISTIAN RELIGION carries with it internal marks of its truth; because, not only without the aid, but in opposition to the civil authority, in opposition to the wit, the argument, and insolence of it's enemies, it made its way, and gained an establishment in the world; because it exhibited the accomplishment of some prophecies, and presents others, which have been since fulfilled; and because its author displayed an example and performed works, which bespeak not merely a superior, but a divine character. Upon these several *facts* I ground my belief as a CHRISTIAN. And till the *evidence* on which they rest can be invalidated by counter evidence, I *must* retain my principles and my profession.”

These extracts from *Sherlock, Gibson, Locke, Watson, Doddridge, and Clarke*, have been here selected, because they serve to illustrate in a few words both the nature and evidences of Christianity. Thus says an ingenious writer, the Rev. Robert Hall, late of Cambridge:—“ When at the distance of more than half a century Christianity was assaulted by a Woolston, a Tindal, and a Morgan, it was ably supported both by clergymen of the established church and writers among Protestant Dissenters; the labours of a *Clarke* and a *Butler* were associated with those of *Doddridge*, a *Leland*, and a *Lardner*, with such equal reputation and success,



as to make it evident that the *intrinsic excellence* of religion needs not the aid of external appendages; that with or without a dowry, her charms are of equal force to fix and engage the heart."

It would, however, be as useless as it is impossible, to refer the reader to *all* the principal treatises which have been written at different periods for the defence and illustration of the Christian religion. But a few ought to be mentioned in justice to the subject; and those alone shall be specified which are the easiest of access. The student may therefore consult *Lardner's Credibility*, *Watson's Theological Tracts*, *Priestley's Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*, *Butler's Analogy*, and both *Maltby's Illustrations* and *Paley's View of the Evidences of Christianity*. For the use of private Christians read *Doddridge's Three Sermons on the Evidences of the Christian Religion*, *Plain Reasons for being a Christian*, and an answer to the question, *Why are you a Christian*, by an American divine, but reprinted in this country. Nor can it be improper here to mention a small piece published by Mr. Richard Allchin, of Maidstone, entitled *A Familiar Address to young Persons on the Truth and Importance of Christianity*. The substance of volumes is comprised within about thirty pages, drawn up with neatness and simplicity. And solemnly doth it concern both ministers and parents, as they are accountable at the tribunal of Heaven, to furnish

the RISING GENERATION with *religious* principles, which by operating on the springs of human conduct, will insure their temporal and eternal felicity.

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## MAHOMETANISM.

MAHOMETANISM is the religion of *Mahomet*, who was born in 571, at Mecca, a city of Arabia, and died at Medina 631. His system is a compound of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity; and the Koran, which is their Bible, is held in great reverence. It is replete with absurd representations, and is supposed to have been written by a Jew. The most eloquent passage is allowed to be the following, where God is introduced, bidding the waters of the deluge to cease: "Earth, swallow up the waters; heaven, draw up those thou hast poured out: immediately the waters retreated, the command of God was obeyed, the ark rested on the mountains, and these words were heard—*Woe to the wicked!*" Lust, ambition, and cruelty, are the most prominent traits in Mahomet's conduct; and Voltaire has written a fine tragedy on this subject. The great doctrine of the Koran is the *unity of God*, which, together with the *mission of Christ*, is strongly insisted upon by the prophet. Indeed he persuaded his followers that he was the *Paraclete*, or Comforter which Christ had promised.

his disciples. In this respect the Mahometan religion constitutes a powerful collateral proof of the truth of Christianity. Nor has this circumstance, suggested to me by a worthy friend, been sufficiently considered by Christians. Thus we may extract good from evil, and it is our duty to avail ourselves of every thing which tends to augment the evidences of our holy religion. Dean Prideaux hath largely proved in his letter to Deists, that there are seven marks of an imposture; that these all belong to Mahometanism, and that not one of them can be charged on Christianity. See Sale's Koran, Prideaux's Life of Mahomet, Dr. White's Sermons at the Bampton Lecture, and Dr. Toulmin's Dissertations on the Internal Evidence of Christianity, and on the Character of Christ compared with that of other Founders of Religion or Philosophy. Mr. Gibbon, in his Roman History, gives the following curious specimen of Mahometan divinity; for the prophet propagated his religion by force of arms:—"The sword (saith Mahomet) is the key of heaven and of hell; a drop of blood shed in the cause of God, or a night spent in arms, is of more avail than two months of fasting or prayer. Whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven at the day of judgment: his wounds shall be resplendent as vermillion, and odoriferous as musk, the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubims!"

Mr. Clarke, in his answer to the question, *Why are you a Christian?* already mentioned, has these just observations on Mahometanism:—"I never wondered that the attempts of Mahomet to establish his religion were crowned with success. When I peruse the Koran, and examine the materials of which it is composed; when I observe how much the work is indebted to the Jewish and Christian revelations; when I survey the particular part which Mahomet or his agents supplied; when I see with how much art the whole is accommodated to the opinions and habits of the Jews, Christians, and Pagans; when I consider what indulgencies it grants, and what future scenes it unfolds; when I advert to the peculiar circumstances of the times, when its author formed the vast design of assuming the royal and prophetic character; and more than all, when I contemplate the reformer at the head of a conquering army, the Koran in one hand, and in the other a sword, I cannot be surprised at the civil and religious revolution which has immortalized his name. With *his* advantages, how could he fail of success? Every thing favoured the enterprise. The nations beheld a military apostle. And they who were unconvinced by his arguments, trembled at his sword!"

Mahometanism distributes itself into two general parts, Faith and Practice; the former containing six branches—belief in God; in his angels; in his

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scriptures; in his prophets; in the resurrection and final judgment; in the divine decrees: the latter relating to prayer with washing; alms; fasting; pilgrimage to Meccca, and circumcision. Indeed the system of Mahomet has no symmetry or beauty of parts; it is an heterogeneous compound of the various religions then existing, and artfully accommodated to the prejudices and passions of the Eastern regions of the world.

If we suppose according to the usual estimate, that the inhabitants of the world amount to *eight hundred millions*—then the whole may be thus divided: *Jews, two millions and a half; PAGANS, four hundred and eighty-two millions; CHRISTIANS, one hundred seventy-five millions and a half; and MAHOMETANS, one hundred and forty millions.* The *CHRISTIANS* again may be thus distributed into *Greek and Eastern Churches, thirty thousand; ROMAN CATHOLICS, eighty thousand; and PROTESTANTS, sixty-five thousand and a half.* The above calculation, which is supposed to be pretty accurate, must be gratifying to the curious reader.

As the existence and attributes of the Supreme Being constitute the foundation of all religion, natural and revealed, a plan of the *attributes* of God shall be here introduced, drawn up by Jeremiah Hunt, D. D. the friend of Lardner and Benson, a divine of great good sense and piety.

## THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

### His Natural Attribute—A SPIRIT.

From his *Natural* Attribute arise his—KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM, POWER.

From the above Attributes arise his *Holiness* or { TRUTH, JUSTICE, EQUITY, GOODNESS, MER-  
MORAL Perfections ..... } CY, PATIENCE,

Attributes arising from his manner of existing by—ABSOLUTE NECESSITY.

From a *Combination* of the above Attributes arise his { ETERNITY, IMMENSITY, IMMUTABILITY, IN-  
FINITY, UNITY, HAPPINESS, MAJESTY,  
GLORY, SOVEREIGNTY.

*Relatives* Attributes—CREATOR, PRESERVER, GOVERNOR, JUDGE.

As he is Infinite and we Finite, he must therefore be—INCOMPREHENSIBLE!

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NOTE. Dr. J. Hunt died September 5th 1744, in the 67th year of his age. Dr. Lardner preached his Funeral Sermon at Pinner's Hall. His Works in four volumes are happily illustrative of the nature and genius of Christianity.

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To the young Reader the preceding plan of the *attributes of God*, so easy and natural, so curious and exact, must be useful, because the *various opinions* I am about to describe arise from the different conceptions formed by the different sects of these perfections of the Supreme Being. And I must be permitted to add, that, it is for want of a better knowledge of *the attributes of God* so admirably displayed in the Old and New Testament, that unbelievers reject revelation in general, and that the advocates of enthusiasm and superstition, abuse and disgrace Christianity. For to use the words of the sensible author of the above plan—"Without this knowledge of the *Divine Perfections* we are not capable of being free from all *superstition*, neither can we see the weakness of *enthusiasm*. By a right knowledge of the *Divine Perfections*, we not only come to know what is *most important* in religion; but we derive very strong and powerful motives to influence and engage us to the practice of what is truly religious, and what will render us acceptable to God. Above all, let us take care that this knowledge has the proper effect and influence upon our temper and life. Such as are our sentiments, such in all probability will our behaviour be. Right sentiments will produce right dispositions, and right actions. And by *these* we shall grow up to a likeness to God more and more in this life, and shall, when we are called to leave

this world, have a more solid and well grounded hope of being for ever happy, in a much more perfect, glorious and happy state."



HAVING given this preliminary account of *Atheism, Deism, Theophilanthropism, Judaism, the Chinese Religion, Christianity, and Mahometanism*, we now proceed to the DENOMINATIONS of the Christian world. In the first ages of Christianity there were various sects, which have long ago sunk into oblivion, and whose names therefore exist only in the pages of ecclesiastical history. It is not our purpose even to glance at these *ancient* sects, but only briefly to notice those which in *the present day* attract our attention. The most distinguished may be included under the following threefold arrangement: Opinions respecting the person of Christ; respecting the means and measure of God's favour; and respecting Church government, and the administration of ceremonies.



## I.

### OPINIONS RESPECTING THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

JESUS Christ being the medium by which the Deity hath imparted a knowledge of his will to mankind, *the person* of Christ has been eagerly



investigated, and *the nature of God* rendered the subject of rude and unhallowed controversy. This has filled the religious world with violent contentions, nor are they likely to be brought speedily to a termination. In the mean time, it would become us to discuss this topic with modesty and humility. It is, however, my present province to state the existing opinions respecting this abstruse subject: it shall be done in a few words, and I hope with accuracy.

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## TRINITARIANS.

THE *Trinitarians* believe the doctrine of a Trinity, by which is generally understood, that there are three distinct persons in one undivided Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The word *Trinity* is not to be found in the Bible; but is a scholastic term, derived from the Latin word *Trinitas*, denoting a threefold unity. Calvin himself reprobates the term, as being *barbarous*, and of human invention. The most learned writers entertain such various and contradictory sentiments respecting this mystery, that it is difficult to know to whom the term Trinitarian is justly applicable. Waterland, Howe, Sherlock, Pearson, Burnet, Beveridge, Wallis, and Watts, have each of them separate opinions on this subject. Some think Trinitarians reducible to two classes: those who believe that

there is no proper divinity in Christ, beside that of the Father ; and the class of Tritheists, who maintain that there are three equal and distinct Gods. This representation, however, has been called in question by the opposite party ; but, the truth is, that being professedly a *mystery*, there appear to be no definite ideas on the subject.

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## ATHANASIANS.

NEARLY allied to this latter class are the *Athanasians*, a name derived from Athanasius, a father of the Christian church, who lived in the fourth century. The creed which bears his name in the Common Prayer-Book, is not of his composition ; and so little attached was Archbishop Tillotson to it, that in writing to Dr. Burnet, the historian, he says, " I wish we were well rid of it." The episcopal church in America has rejected it.—Were the account of the doctrine of the Trinity contained in this creed ever so just and satisfactory, yet its *damnatory* clauses are highly exceptionable, and have given just offence to some of the more sensible and worthy members of the established church. On this subject, Dr. Prettyman, (the present Bishop of Lincoln, who has lately changed his name to *Tomline*,) in his *Elements of Theology*, speaks with candour and moderation :—" Great objection has

been made to the clauses of this creed, which denounce eternal damnation against those who do not believe the Catholic faith, as here stated; and it certainly is to be lamented, that assertions of so peremptory a nature, unexplained and unqualified, should have been used in any human composition." The prelate then endeavours to account for the introduction of such clauses into the creed; and then adds,—“ We know that different persons have deduced different and even opposite doctrines from the words of scripture, and consequently there must be many errors among Christians; but since the gospel no where informs us, what degree of error will exclude from eternal happiness, I am ready to acknowledge that, in my judgment, notwithstanding the authority of former times, our church would have acted more wisely and more consistently with the general principles of mildness and toleration, if it had not adopted the *damnatory* clauses of the Athanasian creed! Though I firmly believe, that the doctrines of this creed are all founded in Scripture, I cannot but conceive it to be both *unnecessary* and *presumptuous* to say, that “except every one do keep them whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.”

Mr. Broughton, in his *Dictionary of all Religions*, under the article Trinity, has the following paragraph, which may assist the reader on this most abstruse subject: “The doctrine of the TRINITY, as pro-

fessed in the Christian church, is briefly this: that there is ONE GOD in THREE distinct PERSONS, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST: *person* signifying here the same as *essence*, with a particular manner of subsistence, which the Greek fathers called *hypostasis*, taking it for the incommunicable property that makes a person. The *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, are believed to be three *distinct persons* in the divine nature; because the Holy Scriptures, in speaking of these three, so distinguish them from one another, as we use in common speech to distinguish *three several persons*. There are many instances to this purpose, particularly the form of administering the sacrament of baptism, which runs, *in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*; and that solemn benediction with which St. Paul concludes his second epistle to the Corinthians: *The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* And the *three Witnesses in heaven*, mentioned by St. John\*.

“ Each of these three persons is affirmed to be God, because the names, properties, and operations of God, are in the Holy Scriptures attributed to each of them. The divinity of the Father is out

\* This passage has for some time been deemed an interpolation, and Dr. Tomline gives it up in his *Elements of Christian Theology*. The late Mr. Porson, a profound Greek scholar has, it is thought, in his controversy with Archdeacon Travis, settled the subject.

of the question. That of the Son is proved from the following texts, among many others: St. John says, *The word was God*: St. Paul, that *God was manifested in the flesh*; that *Christ is over all, God blessed for ever*. Eternity is attributed to the Son: *The Son hath life in himself*. Perfection of knowledge—*As the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father*. The Creation of all things—*All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was not made*. And we are commanded to *honour the Son as we honour the Father*. The divinity of the Holy Ghost rests upon the following proofs, among others: *Lying to the Holy Ghost is called lying to God*. Because Christians are the *temples of the Holy Ghost*, they are said to be the *temples of God*. His *teaching all things*, his *guiding into all truth*, his *telling things to come*, his *searching all things, even the deep things of God*, &c. are alledged as plain characters of his divinity. Besides, he is joined with God the Father, as an object of faith and worship, in baptism and the apostolical benediction. This doctrine is called a *mystery*, because we are not able to comprehend the particular manner of the existence of the three persons in the Divine Nature.” Dr. Jeremiah Taylor remarks with gravity, that “He who goes about to speak of the mystery of the Trinity, and does it by words and names of man’s invention, talking of essences and

existences, hypostases and personalities, priorities in co-equalities, and unity in pluralities, may amuse himself and build a tabernacle in his head, and talk something he knows not what; but the *good man*, who feels the power of the Father, and to whom the Son is become wisdom, sanctification, and redemption, and in whose heart the love of the Spirit of God is shed abroad—*this man*, though he understands nothing of what is unintelligible, yet he alone truly understands the Christian doctrine of the Trinity.”

It were well, if before we made up our minds on this intricate article of faith, we were carefully to read Dr. Watts's *Essay on the Impotence of any Human Schemes to explain the Doctrine of the Trinity*. This essay shews, first, that no such scheme of explication is necessary to salvation; secondly, that it may yet be of great use to the Christian church; and, thirdly, that all such explications ought to be proposed with modesty to the world, and never imposed on the conscience.

Bishop Burnet tells us, that before the Reformation it was usual in England to have pictures of the Trinity. God the *Father* was represented in the shape of an old man with a triple crown, and rays about his head! The *Son*, in another part of the picture, looked like a young man, with a single crown on his head, and a radiant countenance. The blessed Virgin was between them, in a sitting

posture; and the *Holy Ghost*, under the appearance of a dove, spread his wings over her! This picture, he tells us, is still to be seen in a prayer book printed in the year 1526, according to the ceremonial of Salisbury. Skippon also tells us, there is at Padua a representation of the Trinity, being the figure of an old man with three faces and three beards! How contrary are these absurd representations of the Deity to the sublime declaration of our Saviour! John iv. 24. "*God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*"

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## SABELLIANS.

THE *Sabellian* reduces the three persons in the Trinity to three characters or relations. This has been called by some a *modal* Trinity, and the persons who hold it *Modalists*. Sabellius, the founder of the sect, espoused the doctrine in the third century. Of his tenets, the accounts are various. Some say, he taught that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, were one subsistence, and one person, with three names; and that in the Old Testament the Deity delivered the law as Father, in the New Testament dwelt among men as the Son, and descended on the apostles as the Holy Spirit. This opinion gains ground in the principality of Wales.

“The Sabellians (says Mr. Broughton) made the *Word* and the *Holy Spirit* to be only virtues, emanations, or functions of the Deity. They held, that he who in heaven is the *Father* of all things, descended into the Virgin, became a child, and was born of her as a *Son*; and that having accomplished the mystery of our salvation, he diffused himself on the apostles in tongues of fire, and was then denominated the *Holy Ghost*. They resembled God to the sun, the illuminative virtue or quality whereof was the *Word*, and its warming virtue the *Holy Spirit*. The word they taught was darted like a divine ray, to accomplish the work of redemption; and that being re-ascended to heaven, as the ray returns to its source, the warmth of the Father was communicated after a like manner to the apostles. Such was the language of Sabellians.”

Between the system of Sabellianism, and what is termed the *Indwelling* scheme, there appears to be a considerable resemblance, if it be not precisely the same, differently explained. The *Indwelling* scheme is chiefly founded on that passage of the New Testament, where the Apostle, speaking of Christ, says—“In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” Dr. Watts, towards the close of his life, became a Sabellian, and wrote several pieces in defence of it.\* His sen-

\* See Dr. Watts's *Last Thoughts* on the Trinity, in a



timents on the Trinity appear to have been, that “the Godhead, the Deity itself, personally distinguished as the Father, was united to the man Christ Jesus, in consequence of which union or *indwelling* of the Godhead, he became properly God.” Mr. Palmer, in his edition of *Johnson’s Life of Watts*, observes that Dr. Watts conceived this union to have subsisted before the Saviour’s appearance in the flesh, and that the human soul of Christ existed with the Father from before the foundation of the world: on which ground he maintains the real descent of Christ from heaven to earth, and the whole scene of his humiliation, which he thought incompatible with the common opinion concerning him. Dr. Doddridge is supposed to have been of these sentiments, and also Mr. Benjamin Fawcett, of Kidderminster, who published a valuable piece, entitled *Candid Reflections concerning the Doctrine of the Trinity*. It is a pity that this work is not re-published, and widely circulated throughout the religious world.

pamphlet republished by the Reverend Gabriel Watts, now of Chichester. It was printed by the doctor in the year 1745, three years only before his death. It is on this account highly valuable, and ought, in justice to that great and good man, to have been inserted in the recent edition of his works. From this piece it appears that Dr. Watts had discarded the common notion of the Trinity.

## ARIANS.

THE *Arian* derives his name from Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, who flourished about the year 315, and the propagation of whose doctrine occasioned the famous council of Nice, assembled by Constantine, in the year 325. Arius owned Christ to be God in a subordinate sense, and considered his death to be a propitiation for sin. The Arians acknowledge that the Son was the *word*, though they deny its being eternal; contending, that it had only been created prior to all other beings. Christ, say they, had nothing of man in him, except the flesh, with which the *Logos*, or *word*, spoken of by the apostle John, was united, which supplied the rest. The Arians, though they deny that Christ is the *eternal God*, yet they contend against the Socinians for his *pre-existence*. His pre-existence they found on the two following passages, among many others:—BEFORE *Abraham was I am*. And the prayer of Jesus—“*Glorify me with that glory which I had with thee BEFORE the world began*.” These and other texts of a similar kind, are, in their opinion, irrefragable proofs that Christ did actually exist in another state before he was born of the Virgin Mary in the land of Judea. This matter has been argued by various writers; and names of the first character have distinguished



themselves in the Arian controversy. It has also been urged by the advocates of Arianism, that the *pre-existent dignity* of Christ, accounts for that *splendid apparatus of prophecies and miracles*, with which the mission of the Messiah was attended. In modern times, the term *Arian* is indiscriminately applied to those who consider Jesus simply subordinate to the Father. Some of them believe Christ to have been the creator of the world; but they ALL maintain that he existed previous to his incarnation, though in his pre-existent state they assign him different degrees of dignity. Hence the appellation *High* and *Low Arian*.

That valuable practical writer, Mr. Job Orton, though he never published any thing explicitly on the Trinity, is supposed, during the latter period of his life, to have entertained these sentiments of the person of Christ. He used to recommend the two following tracts, as having given him the most satisfaction on that subject—*A Sober and Charitable Disquisition on the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, by Simon Brown; and *An Essay towards a Demonstration of the Scripture Trinity*, by Dr. Scott; a new edition of which has been just published by the venerable Mr. Samuel Goadby. Of the system of Arianism, Dr. Clarke, in his *Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, Mr. Henry Taylor (for many years vicar of Portsmouth) in his learned work entitled *Ben Mordecai's Apology*,



Mr. Tomkins, in his *Mediator*, and Mr. Hopkins, in his *Appeal to the Common Sense of all Christian People*, have been deemed able advocates. Mr. Whiston, the astronomer and translator of Josephus, revived this controversy in the beginning of the last century. Soon after, Dr. Clarke published his celebrated treatise, entitled *the Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*, which was disapproved of by the convocation, and answered by Dr. Waterland, who had been charged with verging towards Tritheism. "Erasmus (says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) seemed to have aimed in some measure to restore Arianism at the beginning of the 16th century, in his *Commentaries on the New Testament*. Accordingly he was reproached by his adversaries with Arian interpretations and glosses, Arian tenets, &c. to which he made little answer, save that there was no heresy more thoroughly extinct than that of the Arians." But Erasmus is known to have been exceedingly timid in his disposition, and confessed in one of his letters to a friend, that he possessed not the spirit of a martyr. Of the truth of this declaration, there were many proofs.

The history of the Arian controversy, in modern times, may be found in a pamphlet, entitled "An account of all the considerable Books and Pamphlets that have been wrote on either side, in the controversy concerning the Trinity, from the year 1712; in which is also contained an Account of the

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Pamphlets written this last year on each side by the Dissenters, to the end of the year 1719:" published at London, 1720.

Thomas Emlyn, a pious and learned divine, should be mentioned here, since he has been rendered memorable for his sufferings in the cause of Arianism. He was a dissenting minister in Dublin, and there shamefully persecuted on account of his religious sentiments. He rejected the common notion of the Trinity, but firmly maintained the pre-existence of Christ. He died in London, 1741; and his works were published by his son, an eminent counsellor, in three volumes; to which are prefixed memoirs of the author.

Dr. Price, in his sermons on the Christian doctrine, has taken great pains in explaining and defending the principles of Arianism. He states at large the nature of the doctrine, and enumerates the advantages arising from it in the explication of the Scriptures. To these discourses, the reader is referred, and whatever he may think of the arguments urged in favour of that system, he must admire the truly Christian spirit with which they are written. The reader is also referred to a more recent work, entitled *Lectures on the Works of Creation and the Doctrines of Revelation*, by the Rev. B. Carpenter; particularly the *second* volume.

Some few Arians, and most of the present Socinians, add to their creed the doctrines of Ne-

*cessity, Materialism, and Universal Restoration*, though these tenets are by no means peculiar to them. Towards the close of this Sketch will be found an explanation of *Universal Restoration*: and some little account shall be here given of *Necessity and Materialism*.

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## NECESSARIANS.

The doctrine of *Necessity* regards the origin of human actions, and the specific mode of the divine government. It teaches that all actions, both *good* and *bad*, are strictly *necessary*—thus *every* circumstance cannot be otherwise than it is throughout the creation of God. Much controversy has there been on this abstruse subject. Collins, Priestley, and Crombie; Palmer, Price, and Gregory, are authors who have distinguished themselves in the controversy; the three former being for, and the three latter against *Necessity*. The opponents of *Necessity* strenuously maintain that it destroys all virtue and vice; whilst its advocates declare it to be the most consistent mode of explaining the divine government. It is not for us to determine, on so profound a subject, where the truth lies; and it is remarkable, that the perplexity of the theme harassed *angelic* minds, according to the representation of Milton:—

" Others apart, sat on a hill retir'd,  
" In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high,  
" Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate;  
" Fix'd fate, free-will, fore-knowledge absolute,  
" And found no end—in *wandering mazes* lost !"

To short-sighted mortals, with all their boasted wisdom, the subject must appear dark, and in many respects unfathomable. The solution of such difficulties ought to be referred to a more enlightened sphere of being ! Dr. Watts, indeed, thinks it probable that it will constitute one of the sublime employments of the blessed in the heavenly world.

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## MATERIALISTS.

THE doctrine of *Materialism* respects the nature of the human soul, and the peculiar mode of its existence. It teaches that the soul is not a principle independent of the body, but that it results from the organization of the brain, though in a manner which will not admit of explication. This doctrine is thought by its advocates to be not only more philosophical, but to point out more fully the necessity and value of a *resurrection from the dead*—which is a leading doctrine of Christianity. Materialists deny any intermediate state of consciousness between death and the resurrection. Dr.

Price and Priestley had a friendly correspondence on this article; and though Dr. Price was no materialist, yet he did not hold with an intermediate state. Those who deny the existence of an intermediate state, are sometimes called *Soul-sleepers*. See Archdeacon Blackburn's *Historical View of this Controversy*, and Dr. Law's *Appendix to his Theory of Natural and Revealed Religion*. *The Light of Nature Pursued*, by Edward Search, Esq. is a curious work relating to this subject, and has been lately republished, as well as an *abridgment* of it. It contains ingenious illustrations: the author's real name was Tucker; he died in 1775.

Had not Necessity and Materialism been more of a *philosophical* than of a *theological* nature, they should have received minuter explication. Sufficient, it is hoped, has been said on these subjects to give the reader some idea of the nature and tendency of the controversy which has been agitated respecting them. Those persons who sit down to read treatises on such abstruse topics will wretchedly waste their time, provided they do not possess habits of close thought and attention.

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## SOCINIANS.

THE *Socinian* takes his name from Faustus Socinus, who died in Poland, 1604. There were two



who bore the name Socinus, uncle and nephew, and both disseminated the same doctrine. The Socinian asserts, that Christ had no existence until born of the Virgin Mary; and that, being a man like ourselves, though endowed with a large portion of the divine wisdom, the only objects of his mission were to teach the efficacy of repentance without an atonement, as a medium of the divine favour—to exhibit an example for our imitation—to seal his doctrine with his blood—and, in his resurrection from the dead, to indicate the certainty of our resurrection at the last day. The *simple humanity* of Christ, which forms a principal article of their creed, is founded on passages of Scripture where the Messiah is spoken of as a MAN, particularly the following: ACTS xxii. 2. *Ye men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a MAN, approved of God among you, &c.*—ACTS xxxi. 17. *Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that MAN, whom he hath ordained, &c.*—1 Tim. ii. 5. *There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus.* At the same time it must be acknowledged, that neither the Trinitarian, Sabellian, nor Arian denies his humanity; though none of them hold it in that exclusive and simple sense of the word, for which the Socinian contends. On this account it is, that the Socinians have received the appellation of *Humanitarians*.

Between ancient and modern Socinians, however, a considerable difference obtains. The miraculous conception, and the worship of Christ, both allowed by Socinus, are rejected by most of the modern Socinians. Dr. Priestley distinguished himself in a controversy on this subject with Dr. Horsley, the late bishop of St. Asaph. Dr. Priestley had published his two principal theological works; the one to prove that the first Christians were Unitarians, entitled *The History of Early Opinions*; the other to account for the origin and spread of what is commonly called the orthodox doctrine, entitled *A History of the Corruptions of Christianity*. On one or both of these publications, the Bishop animadverted; and to these animadversions Dr. Priestley made several replies. It is difficult to trace the origin of the Socinian controversy. John Campanus is said to be the first of the Reformers who distinguished himself on this side of the question. Next Michael Servetus, a Spanish physician, whom Calvin persecuted even to death; for in the year 1553 he was committed to the flames, by persons who had themselves just escaped the fangs of the Romish church, and who at least had nominally erected the standard of religious liberty. "It is impossible (says Dr. Maclaine) to justify the conduct of Calvin in the case of Servetus, whose death will be an indelible reproach upon the character of that eminent Reformer. The only thing that

can be alledged, not to deface, but to diminish his crime, is, that it was no easy matter for him to divest himself at once of that persecuting spirit which had been so long nourished and strengthened by the Popish religion, in which he was educated. It was a remaining portion of the spirit of Popery in the breast of Calvin, that kindled this unchristian zeal against the wretched Servetus." See the *Life of Servetus*, just published by Mr. Richard Wright of Wisbeach, where the tragedy is detailed with all its circumstances of brutality. Having mentioned the persecution of Servetus by Calvin, truth, on the other hand, requires it to be mentioned, that Socinus has been accused of persecuting Francis David, who, on account of his rejecting the worship of Christ, was cast into prison, where he died. The persecuting spirit, discoverable in some of the Reformers, diminishes the respectability of their characters; and the only apology that can be made for them is, what has been already mentioned, that the nature and foundation of religious liberty were not then fully understood.

The Socinians flourished greatly in Poland about the year 1551; and J. Siemienius, Palatine of Podolia, built purposely for their use the city of Racow. A famous catechism was published by them, called the Racovian Catechism; and their most able writers are known among the learned by the title of the *Polones Fratres*, or Polonian

Brethren. " Their writings were (says Dr. Mac-laine) republished together in the year 1656, in one great collection, consisting of six volumes in folio, under the title of *Bibliotheca Fratrum*. There are, indeed, in this collection, many pieces wanting, which were composed by the most eminent leaders of the sect; but what is there brought together is nevertheless sufficient to give the attentive reader a clear idea of the doctrine of the Socinians, and of the nature of their institution, as a religious community." An account of these several authors, as well as of the persecution of Francis David, will be found in *Dr. Toulmin's Life of Socinus*.

But the Socinians have appropriated to themselves the appellation of *Unitarians*; and by this name they are now more generally distinguished. Though to this appellation they have no *exclusive* claim, yet it is somewhat more correctly descriptive of their religious tenets than that of Socinians, since they renounce many of the opinions of Socinus. The Arians, if not the Trinitarians, it must be remembered, are equally strenuous for the divine unity, and to deny this fact is an indication of bigotry. See Lindsey's *Historical View of Unitarianism*, Dr. Toulmin's *Life of Socinus*, Hopton Hayne's *Scripture Account of the Attributes and Worship of God, and of the Character and Offices of Jesus Christ*, and Mr. Belsham's *Answer to Mr. Wilberforce*, where the modern Socinian tenets are stated and defended.

The Trinitarians, Arians, and Socinians, have also differed greatly respecting the *personality* of the Holy Spirit. Much has been said on both sides of this intricate question. Dr. Lardner's *Letter on the Logos* may be consulted; and also Mr. Marsom's little piece, entitled the *Impersonality of the Holy Ghost*, the first edition of which was published in 1787. In *Doddridge's Lectures* much information is given respecting this and almost every other article of the Christian faith. Dr. Kippis, not long before his death, published an edition of this valuable work, with additions and improvements. The private Christian, as well as the theological student, will derive much knowledge from the attentive perusal of it.

A note added to this publication by Dr. Kippis, and applicable to this *first* division of religious opinions, is of so excellent a nature, that I am tempted to transcribe it: "When it is considered, how extremely difficult many questions in themselves are, and what different conclusions have been drawn concerning them by men of the profoundest knowledge and deepest reflection, there is a *modest scepticism* which it will become young students to preserve, till time shall have given them the opportunity of wider enquiry and larger observation. This remark would not have been made, if instances had not occurred, of youth who have eagerly, and even arrogantly, adopted an hypothesis on one side

or the other, without sufficiently exercising that patience of thinking, and that slow progress of examination, which are likely to be the most favourable to the acquisition of TRUTH."

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## II.

### OPINIONS RESPECTING THE MEANS AND MEASURE OF GOD'S FAVOUR.

CHRISTIANS having ascertained the person of Christ—whether he be the *eternal God*—or an *Angel* possessing an existence previous to his being born of the Virgin Mary—or a *mere Man*, under the guidance of inspiration—next proceed to consider the *extent* of the blessings of the Gospel, and the *manner* in which they have been conveyed to us. This circumstance, also, has been the source of endless contentions. Peace and charity have been not unfrequently lost in discussion of the subject. Even the Methodists themselves split into two great parties concerning it, and the controversy between their respective leaders, conducted with great acrimony, has scarcely subsided. We shall attempt the delineation of this class of opinions with brevity.

## CALVINISTS.

THE *Calvinist* adheres to the doctrines which Calvin taught at Geneva, about 1540, where he was professor of divinity. The tenets of Calvinism are, predestination, original sin, particular redemption, irresistible grace, and the perseverance of the saints. These, in the theological world, are termed *five points*; and frequent have been the controversies agitated respecting them. As the Calvinists differ among themselves in the explication of these tenets, it would be difficult to give a specific account of them. Generally speaking, however, they comprehend the following propositions: 1st. That God has chosen a certain number in Christ to everlasting glory, before the foundation of the world, according to his immutable purpose, and of his free grace and love, without the least foresight of faith, good works, or any conditions performed by the creature; and that the rest of mankind he was pleased to pass by, and ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sins, to the praise of his vindictive justice. 2dly. That Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, made an atonement only for the sins of the elect. 3dly. That mankind are totally depraved in consequence of the fall; and, by virtue of Adam's being their public head, the guilt of his sin was imputed, and a corrupt nature conveyed to all his posterity, from which proceed all

actual transgressions; and that by sin we are made subject to death, and all miseries, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. 4thly. That all whom God has *predestined* to life, he is pleased, in his appointed time, effectually to call by his word and spirit out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ. And 5thly. That those whom God has effectually called and sanctified by his spirit shall never finally fall from a state of grace. Some have supposed that the Trinity was one of the five points; but this is a mistake, since both the Calvinists and Arminians, who formed the synod of Dort (where this phrase, *five points*, originated) were on the article of the Trinity generally agreed. The most prominent feature of this system is, the election of some, and reprobation of others, from all eternity.

The Calvinists found their sentiments of election on the expression of the Saviour, respecting his having *chosen* his disciples *out of the world*; and more particularly on certain terms used by the apostle Paul in his *Epistle to the Romans*. To the epistolary writers, indeed, they more frequently refer than to any other part of the New Testament. The chief advantage of this system, in the opinion of its advocates, is, to produce in us a *most reverential awe* when we look up to God, and the *profoundest humility* when we look down upon ourselves.



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To the Calvinists also belongs more particularly *the doctrine of atonement*, or that Christ, by his death, made satisfaction to the divine justice for the elect, appeasing the anger of the Divine Being, and effecting on his part a reconciliation. Thus Jesus Christ had the sin of the elect laid upon him ; and in this sense, Luther said that **JESUS CHRIST** was the *greatest sinner* in the world!!! The sentiment is fully expressed by Dr. Watts in these lines :

“ Rich were the drops of Jesu’s blood,  
 “ That calm’d his *frowning* face,  
 “ That sprinkled o’er the *burning* throne,  
 “ And turn’d the *wrath* to grace.”

The manner also in which other Calvinistic writers have expressed themselves on the death of Christ, may be seen by consulting Mr. Wright’s *Anti-satisfactionist*, a new and cheap edition of which is just published. This doctrine, however is reprobated by some of their divines, who consider the death of Christ (with the Arians and Sabellians) as simply a *medium* through which God has been pleased to exercise mercy towards the penitent. Mr. Fuller observes, “ If we say a way was opened by *the death of Christ* for the free and consistent exercise of mercy in all the methods which sovereign wisdom saw fit to adopt, perhaps we shall include every material idea which the Scriptures give us of that important event.”

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Hence it has been remarked, that God is represented as reconciling by the death of Christ, not himself to man, but man to himself. *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*, 2 Cor. v. 19. See Mr. Fuller's publication, entitled *The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems compared*; which is admired by some of the Calvinists, but condemned by others of them, as not coming up to the *full standard of orthodoxy*\*.

But to ascertain the real sentiments of this body of Christians, recourse should be had to the *Assembly's Catechism*, which is taught their children, and may therefore be supposed to contain a just account of their religious opinions. The reader is here referred to two small volumes on the subject; the one by Mr. (now Dr.) *Pye Smith* in favour of Calvinism; the other by Mr. *T. Belsham*, as a reply to it.

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## SUBLAPSARIANS AND SUPRALAPSARIANS.

AMONG the refinements of Calvinism are to be ranked the distinctions of the *Sublapsarians* and

\* Dr. Toulmin and Mr. Kentish replied to this work, whilst Dr. Priestley and Mr. Belsham, against whom it was written, did not think proper to notice it.

*Supralapsarians.* The Sublapsarians assert, that God had only permitted the first man to fall into transgression, without absolutely pre-determining his fall: whereas the Supralapsarians maintain that God had from all eternity decreed the transgression of Adam, in such a manner that our first parents could not possibly avoid this fatal event. Dr. Doddridge, in his Lectures, has thus stated these abstruse distinctions:—"The *Supralapsarian* and *Sublapsarian* schemes agree in asserting the doctrine of predestination, but with this difference, that the *former* supposes that God intended to glorify his justice in the condemnation of some, as well as his mercy in the salvation of others, and for that purpose decreed that *Adam* should necessarily fall, and by that fall bring himself and all his offspring into a state of everlasting condemnation: the *latter* scheme supposes that the decree of predestination regards man as fallen by an abuse of that freedom which Adam had, into a state in which all were to be left to necessary and unavoidable ruin, who were not exempted from it by predestination." Recent divines, who have gone to the height of *Supralapsarianism*, are Mr. Brine and Dr. Gill. Were any thing more necessary to elucidate this subject, it might be added—that the term *Supralapsarian* is derived from two Latin words, *Supra*, above, and *lapsus*, the fall; and the term Sub-

lapsarian, from *Sub*, below or after, and *lapsus*, the fall.

Calvin, in his *Institutes*, states and defends at large the principles of the system. It is written in elegant Latin, is dedicated to Francis the First, King of France, and the dedication has been admired for its boldness and magnanimity.

For a defence of Calvinism, see Edwards *on the Will*, Brine's *Tracts*, Dr. Gill's *Cause of God and Truth*, and Toplady's *Historic Proof of the Calvinism of the Church of England*, a new edition of which has been just published.

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## ARMINIANS.

The *Arminian* favours the tenets of Arminius, the disciple of Beza, and latterly an eminent professor of divinity at Leyden, who flourished about the year 1600. Thinking the doctrine of Calvin with regard to free-will, predestination, and grace, contrary to the mild and amiable perfections of the Deity, he began to express his doubts concerning them in the year 1591; and upon further enquiry, adopted sentiments more nearly resembling those of the Lutherans than of the Calvinists. After his appointment to the theological chair at Leyden, he thought it his duty to avow and vindicate the principles which he had embraced; and the freedom with

which he published and defended them, exposed him to the resentment of those that adhered to the theological system of Geneva. The controversy thus begun in the life-time of Arminius, ended not with his death, and for a long time roused the violence of contending passions\*. His tenets include the five following propositions: 1st, That God has not fixed the future state of mankind by an absolute unconditional decree; but determined from all eternity, to bestow salvation on those whom he foresaw would persevere to the end in their faith in Jesus Christ, and to inflict punishment on those who should continue in their unbelief, and resist to the end his divine assistance. 2dly, That Jesus Christ, by his death and sufferings, made an atonement for the sins of all mankind in general, and of every individual in particular: that, however, none but those who believe in him can be partakers of this divine benefit. 3dly, That mankind are not totally depraved, and that depravity does not come upon them by virtue of Adam's being their public head, but that mortality and natural evil only are the direct consequences of his sin to posterity. 4thly, That there is no such thing as irresistible grace in the conversion of sinners. And, 5thly, That those who are united to Christ by faith, may fall from their faith, and forfeit finally their state of grace. Thus

\* Arminius's motto was a remarkable one—"A good conscience is a paradise."

the followers of Arminius believe that God, having an *equal* regard for all his creatures, sent his Son to die for the sins of the *whole world*; that men have the power of doing the will of God, otherwise they are not the proper subjects of approbation and condemnation; and that, in the present imperfect state, believers, if not particularly vigilant, may, through the force of temptation, fall from grace, and sink into final perdition. The Arminians found their sentiments on the expressions of our SAVIOUR respecting his *willingness* to save *all* that come unto him; especially on his prayer over Jerusalem, his Sermon on the Mount, and above all, on his delineation of the process of the last day, where the salvation of men is not said to have been procured by any *decree*, but because they had done *the will of their Father, who is in heaven*. This last argument they deem decisive; because it cannot be supposed that Jesus, in the account of the judgment day, would have deceived them. They also say, the terms in the *Romans* respecting election, are applicable only to the state of the Jews *as a body*, without reference to the religious condition of individuals, either in the present or future world.\*

\* See a Letter addressed to R. Hawker, D. D. suggested by his defence of the London Female Penitentiary, by J. Evans, second edition. Here are collected together and explained the principal passages usually adduced in favour

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Dr. Whitby, the commentator, who was originally a *Calvinist*, has written a large and elaborate defence of Arminianism; and the reader should consult Dr. Taylor's *Key to the Epistles to the Romans*, which has been much admired on the subject. Since the days of Laud (who was archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of Charles the First) by far the majority of the English clergy have taken this side of the question. Bishop Burnet has given a full account of the opinions of this sect, in his *Exposition of the Seventeenth Article*.

In the last century disputes ran very high in Holland between the Calvinists and the Arminians. On each side considerable talents and learning were displayed; but some shamefully called in the interference of the civil power, and thus terminated a controversy, which for some years had agitated the religious world. For this purpose the famous synod of Dort was held, 1618, and a curious account of its proceedings may be seen in

of *election and reprobation* from the New Testament, and these explications are accompanied with some remarks tending to assuage the asperity of religious controversy, and to promote the mild influence of christian love and charity. The reader is also referred to *A Refutation of Calvinism*, in which the doctrines of original sin, grace, regeneration, justification, and universal redemption are explained, &c. by George Tomline, D. D. Bishop of Lincoln and Dean of St. Paul's.

the series of letters written by the ever-memorable John Hales, who was present on the occasion. This synod was succeeded by a severe and scandalous persecution of the Arminians. The respectable Barnevelt lost his head on a scaffold, and the learned Grotius, condemned to perpetual imprisonment, escaped from the cell and took refuge in France. The storm, however, some time after abated; and Episcopius, an Arminian minister, opened a seminary in Amsterdam, which produced some able divines and excellent scholars.

The principal Arminian writers are, Episcopius, Vorstius, Grotius, Limborch, Le Clerc, Wetstein; not to mention many others of modern times, particularly Mr. John Wesley, in his *Arminian Magazine*, and Mr. Fellowes, in his *Religion without Cant*, and in his elegant work, entitled *Christian Philosophy*.

The Arminians are sometimes called the Remonstrants, because they, in 1611, presented a REMONSTRANCE to the States General, wherein they pathetically state their grievances, and pray for relief. See an interesting work, entitled *An Abridgement of Gerrard Brandt's History of the Reformation in the Low Countries*, 2 vols. 8vo.



## BAXTERIANS.

THE *Baxterian* strikes into a middle path, between Arminianism and Calvinism, and thus endeavours to unite both schemes. With the Calvinist, he professes to believe that a certain number, determined upon in the divine councils, will be infallibly saved; and with the Arminian he joins in rejecting the doctrine of reprobation as absurd and impious; admits that Christ, in a certain sense, died for all, and supposes that such a portion of grace is allotted to *every* man, as renders it his own fault if he does not attain to eternal life. This conciliatory system was espoused by the famous non-conformist Richard Baxter, who died in the year 1691, and who was equally celebrated for the acuteness of his controversial talents, and the utility of his practical writings. Hence came the term Baxterians, among whom are generally ranked both Watts and Doddridge. Dr. Doddridge indeed has this striking remark with which Mr. Evans closes his *Letter* to Dr. Hawker—"That a Being who is said not to tempt any one, and even swears that he desires not the death of a sinner, should *irresistibly* determine millions to the commission of every sinful action of their lives, and then with all the pomp and pageantry of an Universal Judgment condemn them to eternal misery on account of these actions, that hereby he may promote the happiness of others who are or

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shall be irresistably determined to virtue, in the like manner, is of all incredible things to me the most incredible!" *Two Hundred and Twenty-third Lecture of Doddridge's Lectures on Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity.*

In the scale of religious sentiment, Baxterianism seems to be with respect to the subject of divine favour, what Arianism is with respect to the person of Christ. It appears to have been considered by some pious persons as a safe middle way between two extremes. Baxter was an extraordinary character in the religious world. He wrote about 120 books, and had above 60 written against him! Though he possessed a very metaphysical genius, and consequently sometimes made a distinction without a difference, yet the great object of most of his productions was peace and amity. Accordingly his religious system was formed, not to inflame the passions and widen the breaches, but to heal those wounds of the Christian church, under which she had long languished.\*

\* For the particular detail given of the Calvinistic and Arminian sentiments, see a brief but useful history of the Christian Church, in 2 vols. by Dr. Gregory. The best and amplest ecclesiastical history is Mosheim's, in 6 vols. translated from the Latin into English by the late Dr. Mac-laine, who has enriched it with many valuable notes. Dr. Priestley also published, in six octavo volumes, a History of the Christian Church, from the birth of the Messiah down to the present time.

## ANTINOMIANS.

THE *Antinomian* derives his name from two Greek words, *Anti*, against, and *Νομος*, a law, his favourite tenet being, that the law is not a rule of life to believers. It is not easy to ascertain what he means by this position. But he seems to carry the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ, and of salvation by faith without works, to such lengths as to injure, if not wholly destroy, the obligation to moral obedience. Antinomianism may be traced to the period of the Reformation, and its promulgator was John Agricola, originally a disciple of Luther. The Papists, in their disputes with the Protestants of that day, carried the merit of good works to an extravagant length; and this induced some of their opponents to run into the the opposite extreme. "This sect (says the Encyclopædia) sprung up in England during the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, and extended their system of libertinism much farther than Agricola, the disciple of Luther. Some of their teachers expressly maintained, that as the elect cannot fall from grace, nor forfeit the divine favour, the wicked actions they commit are not really sinful; nor are they to be considered as instances of their violation of the divine law; consequently they have no occasion either to confess their sins, or to break them off by repentance. According to them, it is one

of the essential and distinctive characters of the elect, that they cannot do any thing displeasing to God, or prohibited by the law." Luther, Rutherford, Sedgwick, Gataker, Witsius, Bull, Williams, (founder of the Dissenting Library in Red-Cross Street) &c. have written refutations; whilst Crisp, Richardson, and Saltmarsh, put forth defences of the Antinomians. Wisgandus wrote "A Comparison between Ancient and Modern Antinomians." The late Rev. Mr. Fletcher, vicar of Madely, in Shropshire, published *Four Checks to Antinomianism*, which have been much admired.

The term *Antinomian* has been frequently fixed on persons by way of reproach; and therefore many who have been branded with this name have repelled the charge. There are many Antinomians, indeed, of a singular cast in Germany, and other parts of the continent; they condemn the moral law as a rule of life, and yet profess a strict regard for the interests of practical religion. Many persons, however, pronounce Antinomianism to be nothing more than *Calvinism run to seed*. Speculative sentiments of any kind ought not to be carried to a degree which might endanger even in appearance the sacred cause of morality.

## III.

OPINIONS RESPECTING CHURCH GOVERNMENT, AND  
THE ADMINISTRATION OF CEREMONIES.

“THE extent of Christianity in the world, or all those several kingdoms and countries where the Christian religion is professed and embraced (says Mr. Martin in his *Philological Library*) are, taken together, called *Christendom*; and this consists of many (some more general, some more particular, &c.) different religious societies, which are called *churches*. A Christian church is a society or congregation of men and women, who are called out from the vicious world by the preaching of the gospel, and are regulated in all the parts of their ritual discipline and articles of faith by the plain rules and prescriptions of the New Testament, and whose lives are correspondent to their holy professions. The ministers of the Christian Church, in its primitive state, were extraordinary or ordinary. The *Extraordinary* were chiefly three: 1. *Apostles*, who were delegated by Christ with power and commission to preach the gospel, and work miracles in confirmation thereof, among all nations. 2. *Prophets*, who were not such as simply foretold things, but those to whom God was pleased to reveal his more secret counsels and designs, and who related and preached the same to men. 3. *Evangelists*, such as were assistants to the apostles

in preaching the gospel, and were endued with many extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, as of languages and interpretations, &c. But since the establishment of Christianity in the world, these *extraordinary offices* have ceased. The *ordinary* ministers of the Christian church are principally three: 1. A *Bishop*, who had the oversight of the flock or church of Christ; to him pertained the preaching of the word, and due regulation of the church in faith and manners; and this rule and precedence of the bishop is called *Episcopacy*. 2. *Presbyters* or *Elders*, or *Priests*; these were such as preached the word, and administered the sacraments, and performed all the other sacred functions of the ministry, under the inspection of the bishop. But it is a controversy, whether the scripture doth not intend the *same* person or officer by the appellations *Bishop* and *Presbyter*. The power of the *Presbyter* is called *Presbytery*. 3. *Deacons*; these were such as officiate in that part of the Christian ministry which related to the *poor*; and their business was to take the collections of money made in the church, and to distribute it to the necessities of the poor, and other sacred uses; and their office, properly speaking, is called the *Ministry* or *Deaconship*. These officers are perpetual in the Christian church." After this introductory explanation of the Christian church, I proceed to the *Opinions respecting Church government and the administration of Ceremonies*.

## PAPISTS.

THE *Papists* are so denominated from their leading tenet—the infallibility and supremacy of the Pope (in the Latin *Papa*, signifying father,) which they strenuously maintain. By the *infallibility* of the Pope, is understood, that the Pope cannot err in ecclesiastical matters; and by his *supremacy* is meant his authority over all the churches, and sometimes over the princes of the earth. This enormous power has been for some time diminishing, and the Roman Catholics at present are divided on the subject. Some allow the Pope's infallibility and supremacy in their full extent; others acknowledge them in part; and a third wholly reject them. The late Father O'Leary's Tracts may be consulted, who had a dispute on Popery with John Wesley. They also profess to believe, 1. In seven sacraments—baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, extreme unction, or the anointing the sick in the prospect of death, orders, and matrimony. With respect to the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, they hold the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, or that the bread and wine are changed into the *body* and *blood* of Christ; the paying divine worship to the host, or consecrated wafer, and the allowing communion only in one kind, viz. bread to the laity. 2. In works of supererogation, as that the good works of saints are

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meritorious enough to supply the deficiency of others. 3. In the celibacy, or single life of the clergy. 4. In the use of images and sacred relics. The charge of *worshiping Images* has been brought against them, and thought it may prevail among the lower classes, yet the more intelligent disown every thing of the kind. And, 5. In the celebration of divine service in an unknown tongue. Many, however, of the adherents to Popery, in the present day, reject some of the above tenets: and more especially renouncing the supremacy of the Pope, distinguish themselves by the name of Catholics, and sometimes of Catholic Dissenters. The publications of the late Dr. Geddes, on this subject, are worthy of attention. He was a liberal and learned priest among this class of Roman Catholics, and was for several years engaged in a translation of the Bible under the patronage of Lord Petre. Among the Roman Catholics there are to be found several monastic orders, such as the Augustines, the Benedictines, the Carmelites, the Dominicans, the Franciscans, &c. and also a variety of sects, such as the Jesuits, the Jansensits, the Molinists, and others, some of whom were sects of celebrity. The ingenious Pascal, in his *Provincial Letters*, aimed an effective blow at the order of the Jesuits, and it was abolished in France in 1762, on the supposition that they adopted practices inimical to the welfare of their country.



In the council of Trent, held 1549, the tenets of the Papists were reduced into one compact standard, and the summary of Popery, exhibited in Pope Pius's creed, contains the substance of the decrees and canons of this council. The creed is divided into twenty-four articles. The first twelve are expressed in the words of the creed called the *Nicene*; and the remaining twelve are new articles, truly Romish. See Burroughs's View of Popery, taken from the creed of Pope Pius VI. 1735. Father Paul, of Venice, has immortalized himself by a history of the council of Trent; and, though himself a Papist, yet he has exposed with freedom the intrigues by which this council was conducted. Bellarmine, an acute Jesuit, and Bossuet, the bishop of Meaux, are the two most celebrated defenders of Popery. They had also amongst them several eloquent preachers; and the sermons of Massillon, Bourdaloue, and Flechier, are esteemed models of pulpit eloquence. In this country several penal laws were in force against the Roman Catholics; but most of them were repealed in the course of the present reign. It was an opposition to the repeal of these laws that occasioned the disgraceful riots, which broke out during the month of June, 1780, and threatened the destruction of the metropolis!

It is remarkable that the Papists have had amongst them a Pope, who used to be denominated a *Protestant* Pope. His name was Ganganelli, and

he is known to the world under the title of Clement the 14th. His liberality appeared in his actions, and it was his common saying, "We too often lay aside *charity* to maintain *faith*, without reflecting, that if it is not allowed to tolerate men, it is forbidden to hate and persecute those who have unfortunately embraced heresy." He died in 1775, not without suspicion of being poisoned. Such a character must be pronounced an honour to the Romish church, and it is hoped that there are many individuals of this description to be found in her communion. As to his *Letters*, which for the liberality of their sentiments and the elegance of their diction have been much admired, many entertain doubts of their authenticity. Archbishop Fenelon also was distinguished for his benevolence and piety.

Here the account of Popery should have ended, had not the doctrine of *Indulgences* deserved explanation. The history and form of these indulgences are thus given us by that eminent historian Dr. Robertson, in his History of Charles the Fifth. "According to the doctrine of the Romish church, all the good works of the saints, over and above those which were necessary towards their own justification, are deposited together, with the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, in one inexhaustible treasury. The keys of this were committed to St. Peter, and to his successors the Popes, who may open it at pleasure, and by transferring a portion of this

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superabundant merit to any particular person for a sum of money, may convey to him either the pardon of his own sins, or a release for any one in whom he is interested, from the pains of purgatory ; which indulgences were first invented in the eleventh century, by Urban the Second, as a recompence for those who went in person upon the meritorious enterprize (commonly called the *Crusades*) of conquering the Holy Land. They were afterwards granted to those who hired a soldier for that purpose ; and in process of time were bestowed on such as gave money for accomplishing any pious work enjoined by the Pope. Julius the Second had bestowed indulgences on all who contributed towards building the church of St. Peter at Rome ; and as Leo the Tenth was carrying on that magnificent and extensive fabric, his grant was founded on the same pretence."

The following is the form of these indulgences :  
" May our Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon thee, and absolve thee by the merits of his most holy passion ! And I, by the authority of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and of the most holy Pope, granted and committed to me in these parts, do absolve thee, first from all ecclesiastical censures, in whatever manner they have been incurred, and then from all thy sins, transgressions, and excesses, how enormous soever they be, even from such as are reserved for the cognizance of the holy

see, and, as far as the keys of the holy church extend, I remit to thee all punishment which thou dost deserve in purgatory on their account; and I restore thee to the holy sacraments of the church, to the unity of the faithful, and to that innocence and purity which thou didst possess at baptism; so that when thou dost die, the gates of punishment shall be shut, and the gates of the paradise of delight shall be opened; and if thou shalt not die at present, this grace shall remain in full force when thou art at the point of death! In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

This was the form of absolution used by Tetzels, a Dominican friar, who in the sixteenth century, was appointed to sell these indulgences in Germany, which eventually brought about the Reformation.

We must not omit the mention of a tract on Popery, entitled "A Modest Apology for the Roman Catholics of Great Britain, addressed to all moderate Protestants, particularly to the Members of both Houses of Parliament." This piece came from the pen of the late Dr. Geddes, who has been already mentioned, and is written with learning and ingenuity. It is indeed, a singular performance. We shall just add, that the reader may form some idea of the present state of Popery, from a recent pamphlet published by Dr. Milner, the his-

torian, of Winchester, and a Catholic bishop; it is an account of a miracle wrought on a poor maid-servant of Wolverhampton, at the well of St. Winfrid, Holywell, Flintshire, June 28, 1805. See also his Letters to a prebendary, the late Dr. Sturges, a work of considerable ability and information.

## GREEK, OR RUSSIAN CHURCH.

THE *Greek* or *Russian Church*, which now spreads itself over the eastern part of Europe, is ancient, and bears a resemblance to the Church of Rome. Denying, however, the infallibility and supremacy of the Pope, they are in communion with the Patriarch of Constantinople. Amongst other articles of belief, they are distinguished for these three: 1. The rejection of images in the worship of the Deity. 2. The doctrine of consubstantiation, or the union of the body of Christ with the sacramental element. 3. The administration of baptism, by immersing the whole body in water.\*

The Russian, or Greek church equals the Latin or Romish church in the number of ceremonies and

\* At this time I have a *Greek* Pupil with me from Constantinople, and conversing with him on the mode of administering Baptism, it was with no small pleasure he found I coincided with him on this subject.

superstitious customs; some of which are thus described in Chantreau's Travels into Russia:—"At the beginning of the year, the king's day is a singular festival, which the Russians call the benediction of waters. On the Neva, then frozen, there is raised for the ceremony a kind of temple, of an octagonal figure, on the top of which is a St. John the Baptist, and the inside is decorated with pictures, representing the baptism of Jesus, his transfiguration, and some other parts of his life. There your attention is drawn to an enormous Holy Ghost, appearing to descend from heaven; a decoration common in the Greek church, which introduces the Holy Ghost every where! In the middle of the sanctuary is a square place, where the broken ice leaves a communication with the waters running below, and the rest is ornamented with rich tapestry. Around this temple there is erected a kind of gallery which communicates with one of the windows of the imperial palace, at which the empress and her family come out to attend the ceremony, which begins as soon as the regiment of guards have taken post on the river. Then the archbishop, at the sound of the bells, and of the artillery of the fortress, comes out of the palace, and walks in procession, with all his clergy, to the little temple we have just mentioned. When arrived at the place where the ice is broken, he descends, by means of a ladder, to the side of the water.

There he dips his cross three or four times, afterwards says some prayers, an orison to the great St. Nicholas, and the waters are then thought blessed. The prelate sprinkles the water on the company around him, and on the colours of all the regiments that happen to be at St. Petersburg. After this benediction, the archbishop retires. Then the people crowd towards the hole, by which this prelate has blessed the waters. They drink of them with a holy avidity. Notwithstanding the cold, the mothers plunge their infants, and the old men their heads, into them. Every body makes it a duty to carry away some for the purification of their houses, and curing certain distempers, against which the good Russians pretend this holy water is a powerful specific. While every one proceeds to this useful provision, four popes, who are at the four corners of the sanctuary, sing a kind of litany, in which they rehearse all the titles of the empress, and to which the people answer by these words, *Pameloi-Bog!*—May God take pity on her!

“ The Russians have a great number of abstinences, or fasts, and among the rest four Lents. The Greek priests have much more reverence and meditation in their way of going through divine service, than the Latin or Romish priests; and the discipline of their church directs, that when once a priest is at the altar, he must not remove from

it during the time he ought to stand there, whatever may happen to him. For instance: we are told, that the prelate Gabriel, at present metropolitan of Novogorod, and Archimandrite to St. Alexander Neuski, being one day engaged in saying mass at St. Petersburg, the house contiguous to the church took fire, and the flames reaching the steeple, Gabriel was warned of the danger he was in, and yet he stirred not, even although he was told a second time, that the bells would not be long in bruising him to atoms. As the cries of the multitude, conjuring him to remove from certain death, made no impression on him, one of his relations leaped towards the altar, and tore him from it. Scarcely was he twenty paces from it when the steeple fell in with a great crash upon the sanctuary!"

Efforts have been made to join the Greek to the Reformed church; but hitherto they have failed of success. The Rev. Dr. John King published an account of the doctrine, worship, and discipline of the Greek church in Russia. There are several particulars to be found in the *Russian Catechism*, composed by the Czar, and which was published in London, 1725; in Robinson's *Ecclesiastical Researches*, and in a work, entitled *Secret Memoirs of the Court of Petersburg*.

That the reader may form some judgment of the *present* state of the Greek church, the last-



mentioned work presents us with the following fact, translated from the Imperial Gazette of Petersburg.

“ *Petersburgh, 17 Dec. 1798.*

“ In 1796, a coffin was found at the convent of Sumovin, in the city of Trotma, in the eparchy of Volgoda, containing a corpse, in the habit of a monk. It had been interred in 1568, yet was in a state of perfect preservation, as were also the garments. From the letters embroidered on them, it was found to be the body of the most memorable Feodose Sumorin, founder and superior of the convent, and who had been acknowledged as a saint during his life, for the miracles he had performed.” It is then stated, that the directing synod had made *a very humble* report on this occasion to his Imperial Majesty. After which follows the Emperor’s Ukase or proclamation.

“ We PAUL, &c. having been certified by a special report of the most holy synod, of the discovery that has been made in the convent of Spasso-Sumovin, of the miraculous remains of the most venerable Feodose, which miraculous remains distinguish themselves by the happy cure of all those who have recourse to them with *entire* confidence, we take the discovery of these holy remains as a *visible sign*, that the Lord has cast his most gracious eye in the *most distinguished manner* on our reign. For this reason, we offer our fervent

prayers and our gratitude to the Supreme Dispenser of all things, and charge our *most holy* synod to announce this *memorable discovery* throughout all our empire, according to the forms prescribed by the *holy* church, and by the *holy* fathers, &c. The 28th September, 1798."

The following anecdote, however, from the same work, and on the same subject, almost exceeds credibility:—"I knew a Russian princess, who had always a *large silver crucifix* following her, in a separate carriage, and which she usually placed in her bed-chamber. When any thing fortunate had happened to her in the course of the day, and she was satisfied with her admirers, she had lighted candles placed about the crucifix and said to it, in a familiar style,—'See, now, as you have been very good to-day, you shall be treated well—you shall have candles all night—I will love you—I will pray to you.' If on the contrary, any thing occurred to vex this lady, she had the candles put out, forbid the servants to pay any homage to the poor image, and loaded it with reproaches and revilings!!!"—The author closes the chapter with this sensible paragraph:—"I shall not particularize all the superstitions with which such a religion, if it deserve that name, must necessarily inspire an ignorant and enslaved people. It seems the present policy to thicken the clouds of error, which the genius of Peter, the humanity of Elizabeth, and the

philosophy of Catharine, sought in some degree to attenuate. While we pity the state of degradation under which a great people crouches, we should do justice to the enlightened Russians, by whom it is lamented; but they are chained by prejudices, as the giant Gulliver by the Lilliputians; his bonds were weak and imperceptible as his enemies were minute, but every one of his hairs were separately fastened to the ground, and he was unable to raise his head."

In addition to the books already mentioned, I shall close this article of the *Greek Church*, with recommending the REV. WILLIAM TOOKE's *History of Russia*, which may be satisfactorily consulted on *this* as well as on other subjects; it is replete with information\*.

## PROTESTANTS.

UNDER the appellation of *Protestants*, we include all who dissent from Popery, in whatever country they reside, or in whatever sects they have been since distributed. Abroad they are divided into two sorts—the *Lutherans*, who adhere to Luther's tenets; and the *Reformed*, who follow the discipline of Geneva. They were called Pro-

\* Mr. Tooke is well known as the able translator of *Zollikoffer's Sermons*.

testants, because, in 1592, they *protested* against a decree of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and declared, that they appealed to a general council. At present this vast class comprehends those whom Papists used contemptuously to style *Hugonots* in France; the *Refugees* in Holland, who fled thither upon the revocation of the edict of Nantz, 1685; the *Presbyterians* in Scotland; the *Episcopalians* and *Nonconformists* in England; together with a numerous body of Christians in America.

As the *Protestants* originated at the REFORMATION, it will be proper to give a brief account of this illustrious period of Ecclesiastical History.

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#### THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY.

FOR the three first centuries the religion of Jesus Christ stood on its own basis, was rapidly propagated among Jews and Gentiles, and suffered severe persecutions from the Roman emperors. At the commencement of the fourth century, Constantine became a convert to Christianity, and incorporated it with the state. "It was not till the fifth, or near the sixth century, that the Bishop of Rome arrogantly assumed an illegal supremacy over his fellow pastors, and in process of time aimed at a secular government of princes as well as subjects. Though several emperors embraced and defended Christianity, yet the gradual decay of the Roman

empire was a serious impediment to the rising preachers of the newly established religion. Those accomplishments which adorned the conquests of the Romans, and the perfection of science, which had dignified their state, in such an extent, were gradually swept away by the barbarous nations which defeated them, and the close of the sixth century could not trace a vestige of that exalted nation's government, or its laws. Between four and five hundred years was the glorious luminary of the gospel eclipsed by the dismal return of ignorance and of superstition\*. To these dark ages

\* The *Crusades*, commonly called the *holy wars*, were expeditions undertaken by the Papists to drive the Turks from Palestine, or the land of Juden, and thus to rescue the holy sepulchre out of the hands of infidels. There were eight of these crusades, the first in the year 1096, the last in 1270, assisted by Prince Edward, afterwards Edward I. King of England. The number of lives lost in these Quixotic expeditions, is incredible. An account of the crusades is given in Robertson's *Charles the Fifth*, and in Hume's *History of England*. Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, elegantly translated by Hoole, is founded on the crusades, and affords considerable amusement. The reader is referred to a very elegant work entitled *The Itinerary of Archbishop Baldwin through Wales 1188*—by Giraldus. The object the good Archbishop had in view when he traversed the *Principality* was to enlist young persons for this undertaking. According to this account miracles were worked; particularly, when his *Grace* wanted a pulpit—the ground kindly rose underneath him—and gave him a commanding view of his audience—which he no doubt eloquently im-

(as they are by some justly termed, and by others, called *the night of time*) are to be attributed the doctrine of indulgences, partial absolution, transubstantiation, the creation and worship of saints, purgatory, monastic seclusion, &c. So swift was the extinction of knowledge, and its revival so impeded, that persons of the greatest eminence in point of station could scarcely read or write. The clergy themselves, who engrossed what little science was remaining, could scarcely translate the liturgy; and, when ordained, were expressly obliged to affirm, that they could read the Gospels and Epistles, and explain them.

“ The REFORMATION was effected in the sixteenth century, by the pious labours and unwearied studies of those bright characters, Erasmus, Luther, Huss, Jerome of Prague, &c. and as it should seem

proved! The Work affords an interesting picture of our Papist ancestors, and should excite in us, their Protestant descendants, gratitude that we are freed from the yoke of Antichristian tyranny.

The *Inquisition* was a tribunal erected by the popes for the examination and punishment of heretics. It was founded in the twelfth century, by Father Dominic and his followers, who were sent by Pope Innocent the Third to *inquire* into the number and quality of heretics, and then to send an account to Rome. Hence they were termed *Inquisitors*, and their court the *Inquisition*. Its cruelties were shocking beyond description. See Dr. Chandler's History of the Inquisition, which is full of information on the subject.

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the particular act of Providence to facilitate their labours, and extend their influence, we find but half a century before the days of LUTHER, the art of printing was discovered, and not long before, that of the making of paper.

“ This indefatigable Reformer, having the way somewhat cleared for him by Erasmus, had the happiness to discover a copy of the Bible in the neglected library of his monastery. From so valuable a discovery the talents and application of this great man were called forth into more than ordinary exercise; and he quickly drew aside the veil which had concealed the rooted errors and abominations of the priesthood, and exposed the craft and artifice which had deluded the disciples, and disgraced the doctrine of the cross. Unawed by persecution, he proceeded coolly to examine into the several pretensions and inventions of the church of Rome, and overthrew them. He asserted and proved, that monastic retirement, if not contrary to, was no where required by the laws of God; and proposed to the Elector of Saxony, by whose permission he reformed the several churches within his dominions, to expel all abbots and monks, and to convert the convents and mendicant friars into public schools and hospitals. He proceeded to expose all the absurdities and superstitions of the Romish church, and had the satisfaction to see his cause prevail.”—*Birch's Consilia.*

Dr. Robertson also observes:—"It was from causes seemingly fortuitous, and from a source very inconsiderable, that all the mighty effects of the REFORMATION flowed. Leo the Tenth, when raised to the Papal throne, found the revenues of the church exhausted by the vast projects of his two ambitious predecessors, Alexander the Sixth, and Julius the Second. His own temper naturally liberal and enterprising, rendered him incapable of that severe and patient economy which the situation of his finances required. On the contrary, his schemes for aggrandizing the family of the Medici, his love of splendour, his taste for pleasure, and his magnificence in rewarding men of genius, involved him daily in new expences; in order to provide a fund for which, he tried every device that the fertile invention of priests had fallen upon to drain the credulous multitude. Among others, he had recourse to a sale of indulgences. The right of promulgating these indulgences in Germany, together with a share in the profits arising from the sale of them, was granted to Albert, Elector of Mentz, and Archbishop of Magdeburg, who, as his chief agent for retailing them in Saxony, employed Tetzels, a Dominican friar, of licentious morals, but of an active spirit, and remarkable for his noisy and popular eloquence. He, assisted by the monks of his order, executed the commission with great zeal and success, but with little discretion or decency; and though,



by magnifying excessively the benefit of their indulgences, and disposing of them at a very low price, they carried on for some time an extensive and lucrative traffic among the credulous multitude; the extravagance of their assertions, as well as the irregularities in their conduct, came at last to give general offence. The princes and nobles were irritated at seeing their vassals drained of so much wealth, in order to replenish the treasury of a profuse pontiff. Men of piety regretted the delusion of the people, who, being taught to rely for the pardon of their sins on the indulgences which they purchased, did not think it incumbent on them either to abound in faith or to practise holiness. Even the most unthinking were shocked at the scandalous behaviour of Tetzels and his associates, who often squandered in drunkenness, gaming, and low debauchery, those sums which were piously bestowed in hopes of obtaining eternal happiness; and *all* began to wish that some check were given to this commerce, no less detrimental to society, than destructive to religion."

The corrupt state of the church prior to the Reformation, is acknowledged by an author who was both abundantly able to judge concerning this matter, and who was not over forward to confess it. "For some years (says Bellarmine) before the Lutheran and Calvinistic heresies were published, there was not, as contemporary authors testify, any

severity in ecclesiastical judicatories, any discipline with regard to morals, any knowledge of sacred literature, and reverence for divine things; there was not almost any religion remaining." Such a remarkable confession, made by the avowed champion of popery, should not pass unnoticed by Protestants; and before the enemies of Protestantism inveigh against the Reformation, let them consider its absolute necessity, and contemplate the innumerable advantages with which it was attended.

A curious *symbolical representation* of the REFORMATION was exhibited before Charles V. and his brother Ferdinand, at Augsburg, in 1530, at the time when the Lutherans presented their confession of faith to that assembly. As the princes were at table, a company of persons offered to act a small comedy for the entertainment of the company. They were ordered to begin; and first entered a man in the dress of a doctor, who brought a large quantity of small wood, of straight and crooked billets, and laid it on the middle of the hearth, and retired. On his back was written *Reuchlin*. When this actor went off, another entered apparelled also like a doctor, who attempted to make faggots of the wood, and to fit the crooked to the straight; but having laboured long to no purpose, he went away out of humour, and shaking his head. On his back appeared the name of *Erasmus*. A third, dressed like an Augustinian monk, came in with

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a chafing-dish full of fire, gathered up the crooked wood, clapped it on the fire, and blew it till he made it burn, and went away; having upon his frock the name of *Luther*. A fourth entered, dressed like an emperor, who seeing the crooked wood all on fire, seemed much concerned, and to put it out, drew his sword, and poked the fire with it, which only made it burn the brisker. On his back was written *Charles V.* Lastly, a fifth entered in his pontifical habit and triple crown, who seemed extremely surprised to see the crooked billets all on fire, and by his countenance and attitude betrayed excessive grief. Then looking about on every side to see if he could find any water to extinguish the flame, he cast his eyes on two bottles in a corner of the room, one of which was full of oil, and the other of water, and in his hurry he inadvertently seized the oil, and poured it on the fire, which unfortunately made it blaze so violently, that he was forced to walk off. On his back was written *Leo X.*

The reader, who is acquainted with the history of the REFORMATION, will perceive the propriety of the representations here given of those several characters, who were instrumental in bringing about that memorable event.

CHILLINGWORTH, addressing himself to a Romish writer, speaks of *the religion of Protestants* in the following terms, worthy to be inscribed in letters

of gold.—“ Know then, Sir, that when I say *the religion of Protestants* is in prudence to be preferred before your's; as, on the one side, I do not understand by your religion the doctrine of *Bellarmino* or *Baronius*, or any other private man amongst you, nor the doctrine of the Sorbonne, or of the Jesuits, or of the Dominicans, or of any other particular company among you, but that wherein you all agree, or profess to agree, *The Doctrine of the Council of Trent*; so accordingly on the other side, by *the religion of Protestants* I do not understand the doctrine of *Luther*, or *Calvin*, or *Melancthon*, nor the confession of *Augsberg* or *Geneva*, nor the catechism of *Heidelberg*, nor the articles of the Church of England—no, nor the harmony of Protestant confessions; but that wherein they all agree, and which they all subscribe with a greater harmony, as a perfect rule of faith and action, that is, **THE BIBLE!** The *Bible*, I say, the *Bible only*, is the religion of Protestants. Whatsoever else they believe besides it, and the plain, irrefragable, indubitable consequences of it, well may they hold it as a matter of opinion; but as a matter of faith and religion, neither can they with coherence to their own grounds believe it themselves, nor require belief of it of others, without most high and most schismatical presumption. I, for my part, after a long (and as I verily believe and hope) impartial search of the true way to eternal

happiness, do profess plainly that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot, but upon this ROCK only. I see plainly, and with my own eyes, that there are popes against popes, and councils against councils; some fathers against other fathers, the same fathers against themselves; a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age; traditive interpretations of scripture are pretended, but there are few or none to be found: no tradition but that of scripture can derive itself from the fountain, but may be plainly proved either to have been brought in, in such an age after *Christ*, or that in such an age it was not in. In a word, there is no sufficient certainty but of scripture only for any *considering* man to build upon. This, therefore, and this only, I have reason to believe. This I will profess; according to this, I will live; and for this, if there be occasion, I will not only willingly, but even gladly lose my life, though I should be sorry that *Christians* should take it from me.

“Propose me any thing out of the book, and require whether I believe or no, and seem it never so incomprehensible to human reason I will subscribe it with hand and heart, as knowing no demonstration can be stronger than this, *God hath said so, therefore it is true*. In other things I will take no man’s liberty of judging from him; neither shall any one take mine from me. I will think no

man the worse *man*, nor the worse *Christian*; I will love no man the less for differing in opinion from me. And what measure I mete to others, I expect from them again. I am fully assured that God *does* not, and therefore men *ought* not, to require any more of any man than this:—*To believe the scripture to be God's word; to endeavour to find the true sense of it, and to live according to it.*"\* Chillingworth's Works, fol. edit. 1742.

\* Our English translation of the Bible was made in the time and by the appointment of James the First. According to Fuller, the list of the translators amounted to forty-seven. This number was arranged under six divisions, and several parcels of the Bible assigned them. Every one of the company was to translate the whole parcel; then they were to compare these together, and when any company had finished their part they were to communicate it to the other companies, so that nothing should pass without general consent. The names of the persons and places where they met together, with the portions of scripture assigned each company, are to be found in *Johnson's Historical Account of the several Translations of the Bible*. These good and learned men entered on their work in the spring 1607, and three years elapsed before the translation was finished.

From the mutability of language, the variation of customs, and the progress of knowledge, several passages in the Bible require to be newly translated, or to be materially corrected. Hence, in the present age, when biblical literature has been assiduously cultivated, different parts of the sacred volume have been translated by able hands. The substituting a new translation of the Bible in the room

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It may be proper to add, that Chillingworth was a learned divine of the church of England, and lived in the reign of Charles the First. In the earlier part of life he embraced the Romish religion; but having found, after the most impartial investigation, that it was false and inconclusive, he returned to the communion of the church of England, and vindicated the Protestant religion, in a work, entitled *The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Heaven*. This work, though a folio volume, has gone through many editions, and continues to be held in estimation even to the present day. He died at Chichester, and was buried in the cathedral. I saw

of the one now in common use, has been much debated. Dr. Knox, in his ingenious essays, together with others, argues against it; whilst Dr. Newcome, the late Lord Primate of Ireland, the late Dr. Geddes, of the Catholic persuasion, and the late Rev. Gilbert Wakefield, contended strenuously for it. The correction of several passages, however, would deprive Deists of many of their objections, prevent Christians from being misled into some absurd opinions, and be the means of making the scriptures more intelligible, and consequently more beneficial to the world.

Dr. Alexander Geddes, at his decease, had got as far as the *Psalms* in the translation of the Old Testament. Dr. Newcome and Mr. Wakefield published entire translations of the New Testament. The Rev. Edmund Butcher, also, of Sidmouth, has laid before the public a *Family Bible*. An *Improved Version* of the New Testament has lately appeared by the *Unitarians*, founded on Newcome, accompanied with Notes and an excellent Introduction.

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his monument there in the cloisters, and beheld it with veneration.

Before we quit the subject of the REFORMATION, it may not be improper to add a short account of the *Lutherans*. It has been already said, that the Protestants were at first divided into the Lutherans, who adhere to Luther's tenets, and the Reformed, who follow the doctrine and discipline of Geneva. In other words, Luther was at the head of one party; Calvin, the chief of the other. The tenets of the latter have been specified; those of the former, therefore, are the present subject of enquiry.

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## LUTHERANS.

THE *Lutherans*, of all Protestants, are those who differ least from the Romish church, as they affirm that the body and blood of Christ are materially present in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, though in an incomprehensible manner; they likewise represent some religious rites and institutions, as the use of images in churches, the distinguishing vestments of the clergy, the private confession of sins, the use of wafers in the administration of the Lord's Supper, the form of exorcism in the celebration of baptism, and other ceremonies of the like nature, as tolerable, and some of them



useful. The Lutherans maintain with regard to the divine decrees, that they respect the salvation or misery of men in consequence of a *previous knowledge of their sentiments and characters*, and not as founded on the mere will of God, which is the tenet of the Calvinists. Towards the close of the last century, the Lutherans began to entertain a greater liberality of sentiment than they had before adopted, though in many places they persevered longer in severe and despotic principles than other Protestant churches. Their public teachers now enjoy an unbounded liberty of dissenting from the decisions of those symbols of creeds, which were once deemed almost infallible rules of faith and practice, and of declaring their dissent in the manner they judge most expedient. Mosheim attributes this change in their sentiments to the maxim which they generally adopted, that *Christians were accountable to God alone for their religious opinions*; and that no individual could be justly punished by the magistrate for his erroneous notions, while he conducted himself like a virtuous and obedient subject, and made no attempts to disturb the peace and order of civil society.

It may be added, that Luther's opinion respecting the sacrament, is termed *Consubstantiation*; and he supposed that the partakers of the Lord's Supper received, *along with* the bread and wine,

the real body and blood of Christ. This, says Dr. Mosheim, in their judgment was a mystery, which they did not pretend to explain. But his translator, Dr. Maclaine, justly remarks, "That Luther was not so modest as Dr. Mosheim here represents him. He pretended to explain this doctrine of the *real presence*, absurd and contradictory as it is, and uttered much senseless jargon on the subject. As in a *red-hot iron*, said he, two distinct substances, viz. *iron and fire* are united, so is the body of Christ joined with the bread in the eucharist. I mention this miserable comparison to shew into what absurdities the towering pride of system will often betray men of deep sense and true genius."

Such is the account given of the LUTHERANS in a respectable work, and it appears to be founded in truth. I shall only remark, that, according to the above sketch, Luther differed considerably from Calvin respecting election and reprobation; and as to the principle, that Christians are accountable to God alone for their religious opinions, it is a sentiment worthy of a great and elevated mind. It is the corner-stone on which the Reformation has been raised. It is the only true foundation of religious improvement, and wherever it is sincerely embraced, will check every degree of uncharitableness and persecution, and forward the blessed

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reign of love and charity amongst the professors of Christianity.\*

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## HUGONOTS.

THE appellation *Hugonots* was given to the French Protestants in 1561. The term is (by some) supposed to be derived from a gate in Tours, called *Hugon*, where they first assembled. According to others, the name is taken from the first words of their original protest, or confession of faith—*Huc nos venimus*, &c. During the reign of Charles the Ninth, and on the 24th of August, 1572, happened the massacre of Bartholomew, when 70,000 Protestants throughout France were butchered, with circumstances of aggravated cruelty. It began at Paris in the night of the festival of Bartholomew, by secret orders from Charles the Ninth, at the instigation of his mother, the

\* In *Swift's* well known *Tale of a Tub*, he satirises three distinct classes of religious professors—the Church of Rome, under the appellation of *Peter*, whose keys for an admission into heaven are supposed to be in their possession—the Church of England, under the name of *Martin*, because its reformation originated with Martin Luther—and the Dissenters, under the name of *Jack*, on account of the principles of John Calvin being so prevalent amongst them. It is fraught with that dry sarcastic wit for which the writings of the dean of St. Patrick are distinguished.

Queen Dowager Catherine de Medicis. See Sully's Memoirs, and also a fine description of it in the second canto of Voltaire's *Henriade*.

In 1598, Henry the Fourth passed the famous *Edict of Nantz*, which secured to his old friends the Protestants the free exercise of their religion. This edict was cruelly revoked by Lewis the Fourteenth. Their churches were then razed to the ground; their persons insulted by the soldiery, and, after the loss of innumerable lives, 500,000 valuable members of society were driven into exile! In Holland they built several places of worship, and had amongst them some distinguished preachers. Among others were Superville, Dumont, Dubosc, and the eloquent Saurin, five volumes of whose select sermons were translated into our language by the late Mr. Robinson of Cambridge, and the sixth by the late Dr. Hunter. In one of these sermons Saurin makes the following fine apostrophe to the tyrant, Lewis the fourteenth, by whom they were driven into exile; it breathes the noble spirit of Christianity: —“ And *thou*, dreadful Prince, whom I once honoured as my king, and whom I yet respect as a scourge in the hand of Almighty God, *thou* also shalt have a part in my good wishes! These provinces, which thou threatenest, but which the arm of the Lord protects; this country, which thou fillest with refugees, but fugitives animated with love; these walls, which contain a thousand martyrs



of thy making, but whom religion renders victorious, all these yet resound benedictions in thy favour. God grant the fatal bandage that hides the truth from thy eyes may fall off! May God forget the rivers of blood with which thou hast deluged the earth, and which thy reign hath caused to be shed! May God blot out of his book the injuries which thou hast done us, and while he reward the sufferers, may he pardon those who exposed us to suffer! O may God, who hath made thee to us, and to the whole church, a minister of his judgments, make thee a dispenser of his favours, and an administrator of his mercy!"

About the time of the Revolution, 1688, there were many controversies between the Protestant and the Popish divines. Tillotson and Burnet, two clergymen of the church of England, rendered Protestantism great service by their writings; and were, on that account, elevated to the bench by King William of immortal memory. There are also two excellent volumes of *Sermons against Popery*, preached in the early part of last century, by various *Dissenting Ministers*, at *Salter's Hall*. Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, and the *History of his Own Time*, published after his death by his son, are two works which throw light on the state of religion in the last and preceding centuries among Papists, Churchmen, and Dissenters. The merit of these publications, particularly the latter, is ap-



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preciated by Dr. Kippis, under the article *Burnet*, in the *Biographia Britannica*. To these may now be added a *Defence of Protestantism*, by Dr. *Sturges*, in his answer to Dr. Milner, (a Catholic Bishop,) who, in his *History of Winchester*, takes every opportunity of reprobating the Protestant religion, and of erecting on its ruins his beloved edifice of Popery : Dr. S. shews the rise, progress, and tendency of the Romish religion ; animadverts with spirit on the calumnies by which his antagonist had endeavoured to blacken the characters of the Reformers ; and, finally, he proves the Protestant religion, by its views of the Divine Being, and by its regard for the rights of mankind, to be the *only true and primitive Christianity*. The reply by Dr. Milner has been already mentioned.

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## EPISCOPALIANS ;

OR,

## CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THE *Episcopalians*, in the modern acceptance of the term, belong more especially to the Church of England, and derive this title from *Episcopus*, the Latin word for bishop ; or, if it be referred to its Greek origin, from *Επι* over, and *σκοπειν* to look, implying the care and diligence with which bishops

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are expected to preside over those committed to their guidance and direction. They insist on the divine origin of their bishops, and other church officers, and on the alliance between church and state. Respecting these subjects, however, Warburton and Hoadley, together with others of the learned amongst them, have different opinions, as they have also on their thirty-nine articles, which were established in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. They are to be found in most *Common Prayer-Books*; and the Episcopal church in America has reduced their number to twenty. By some, these articles are made to speak the language of Calvinism, and by others have been interpreted in favour of Arminianism. Even lately the controversy was agitated—and the publications of Overton, Kipling, and Daubeney, together with the recent *Charge* of the Bishop of Lincoln, may be consulted on the subject. The doctrines and discipline of the Church of England are nearly connected with the reformation of Luther in Germany, and also with the state of ecclesiastical affairs for a considerable time before that reformation commenced.

Eusebius positively asserts, that Christianity was first introduced into South Britain by the apostles and their disciples; and it is supposed that the *apostle Paul* visited this country, whose zeal, diligence, and fortitude, were abundant. It is also said, that numbers of persons professed the Christian

faith here about the year 150; and according to Usher, there was, in the year 182, a school of learning, to provide the British churches with proper teachers. On this subject of *the first introduction of Christianity into this Island*, the reader is referred to the first volume of *Henry's History of Great Britain*, where his curiosity will be gratified. Something on this interesting subject is expected to appear from the pen of *the Rev. William Richards*, of Lynn, who is known to possess an extensive and accurate knowledge of the history of his own country. It will be contained in a work which he is now preparing for the press, entitled *the Welch Nonconformist's Memorial, or Cambrian Biography*.

JOHN WICKLIFFE, educated at Oxford in the reign of Edward the Third, was the first person in this country who publicly questioned, and boldly refuted the doctrines of Popery. He left behind him many followers, who were called *Wickliffites* and *Lollards*; the latter being a term of reproach taken from the Flemish tongue. In the council of Constance, 1415, the memory and opinions of Wickliffe (who died peaceably at Lutterworth, 1384,) were condemned, and soon after his bones were dug up and burnt. This impotent rage of his enemies served only to promote the cause of reform which Wickliffe had espoused. It is with a view to the subsequent extension of his doctrine



that the judicious Rapin observes,—“ His ashes were thrown into the brook which runs through the town of Lutterworth, the brook conveyed the ashes to the Severn, and the Severn to the sea !” Some remains of his *old pulpit*, in which he first uttered his doctrines, are said to be still seen at Lutterworth, and are beheld by strangers with veneration.

The Church of England broke off from the Romish church in the time of Henry the Eighth, when (as has been already related) Luther had begun the Reformation in Germany. During the earlier part of his reign, Henry was a bigotted Papist, burnt William Tyndal, who made one of the first and best English translations of the New Testament, and wrote fiercely in defence of the seven sacraments against Luther, for which the Pope honoured him with the title of *Defender of the Faith* ! This title is retained by the kings of England even to the present day, though they are the avowed enemies of that *Faith*, by contending for which, he acquired that honourable distinction. Henry falling out with the Pope, took the government of ecclesiastical affairs into his own hands ; and, having reformed many enormous abuses, entitled himself Supreme Head of the Church.

When the Reformation in England first took place, efforts were made to promote the reading of the Scriptures among the common people. Among

other devices for the purpose, the following curious one was adopted: Bonner, Bishop of London, caused six Bibles to be chained to certain convenient places in St. Paul's church, for all that were so well inclined to resort there; together with a certain admonition to the readers, fastened upon the pillars to which the Bibles were chained, to this tenor:—  
“ That whosoever came there to read, should prepare himself to be edified, and made the better thereby; that he bring with him discretion, honest intent, charity, reverence, and quiet behaviour; that there should no such number meet together there as to make a multitude; that no such exposition be made thereupon but what is declared in the book itself; that it be not read with noise in time of divine service, or that any disputation or contention be used about it; that in case they continued their former misbehaviour, and refuse to comply with these directions, the king would be forced against his will to remove the occasion, and take the Bible out of the church.”—See Johnson's Historical account of the several English Translations of the Bible, and the opposition they met with from the church of Rome.

The Church of England is governed by the KING, who is the supreme head; by two archbishops, and by twenty-four bishops. The benefices of the bishops were converted by William the Conqueror into temporal baronies; so that every prelate has

a seat and vote in the House of Peers. Dr. Benjamin Hoadley, however, in a sermon preached from this text, *My kingdom is not of this world*, insisted that the clergy had no pretensions to temporal jurisdictions; which gave rise to various publications, termed by way of eminence the *Bangorian Controversy*, for Hoadley was then bishop of Bangor\*. There is a bishop of Sodor and Man, who has no seat in the House of Peers; and a late prelate of this see was the amiable and learned Dr. Wilson. Since the death of the intolerant Archbishop Laud, men of moderate principles have been raised to the see of Canterbury, and this hath tended not a little to the tranquillity of church and state.

The established church of Ireland is the same as the church of England, and is governed by four archbishops and eighteen bishops. Since the union of Ireland with Great Britain, four only of these spiritual lords sit in the House of Lords, assembled at Westminster.

In the course of the last century disputes arose among the English clergy respecting the propriety of subscribing to any human formulary of religious sentiments. An application for its removal was made to Parliament in 1772, by the petitioning clergy, and received, as it deserved, the most public

\* The memory of this eminent prelate has been insulted by Dr. Milner in his *History of Winchester*, but Mr. Hoadley Ashe and Dr. Sturges have amply vindicated it.

discussion in the House of Commons. The third edition of Archdeacon Blackburn's excellent *Confessional*, was published in 1770, two years previous to the presentation of this clerical petition, when the long controversy, in consequence of the work, was closed, and indeed introductory to the application to Parliament pending, by which the controversy was renewed. Mr. *Dyer's* Treatise against Subscription appeared many years afterwards. Some respectable clergymen were so impressed with the impropriety of subscription, that they resigned their livings, and published reasons for their conduct. Among these, the names of *Robertson, Jebb, Matty, Lindsey*, and *Disney*, will be long remembered. Several others, indeed, resigned preferments held by the same tenure for similar reasons, without giving such reasons to the public, as Mr. Tyrwhitt, Mr. Wakefield, &c. and it has been said that many more reluctantly continue in their conformity, under the contest between their convictions and their inability from various causes to extricate themselves, but who will never repeat their subscriptions. The late Rev. T. Lindsey, however, withdrew from the church, because he objected to the Trinity; professing to worship the *Father* only as *one true God*, to the exclusion of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit, as objects of worship. See "*The Book of Common Prayer Reformed*," used at Essex

Street chapel; a new edition of which has been lately published.

Attempts have been made to amend the articles, the liturgy, and some things which related to the internal government of the church of England. Dr. Watson, the present bishop of Landaff, wrote a *Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury*, in the year ~~1748~~<sup>1778</sup>, in which he argues for the propriety of a more equal distribution of salary among the different orders of the clergy. But this plan, projected by the worthy prelate, together with the preceding proposals for reform by the authors of the *Free and Candid Disquisitions*, and of the *Appeal to Reason and Candour*, have been suffered to sink into oblivion. The church of England has produced a succession of eminent men. Among its ornaments are to be reckoned *Usher, Hall, Taylor, Stillingfleet, Cudworth, Wilkins, Tillotson, Cumberland, Barrow, Burnet, Pearson, Hammond, Whitby, Clarke, Hoadley, Jortin, Secker, Horne, Lowth, and Warburton*. In the Appendix to *Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, will be found a circumstantial account of the correspondence carried on in the year 1718, between Dr. William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, and certain doctors of the Sorbonne of Paris, relative to a project of union between the English and Gallican churches. *Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, Pearson on the Creed, Burnet on the Thirty-nine*

*Articles*, and Bishop Prettyman's *Elements of Theology*\*, are deemed the best defences of Episcopacy.

In Scotland, and other parts, since the revolution, there existed a species of Episcopalians called *Non-jurors*, because being inflexibly attached to the *Stuarts*, who were then driven from the throne, they refused to take the oath of allegiance to the *Brunswick* family. On the decease, however, of the Pretender, whom the Non-jurors styled Prince Charles, and who died at Rome, 1788, they complied with the requisition of government, and now the distinction is abolished. At Lawrence kirk, in the county of Kincardine, 1804, their bishops and clergy swore to the Articles of the United Church of England and Ireland, and then became a branch of that church, being acknowledged as such by the English and Irish prelates, whilst some English clergy have joined their Communion. The Scotch Episcopal church is governed by *eight* bishops, one of whom is always *Primate*. Her places of worship are in general well attended. See Skinner's *Ecclesiastical History*. These Scotch Episcopalians complain that *now* they have abjured

\* *William Frend*, Esq. the celebrated mathematician, late of Cambridge, now *actuary* at the Rock Insurance Office, Blackfriars, published a series of *Letters* to this prelate, by way of reply to certain passages in his *Elements of Theology*.

the House of Stuart, the other Episcopalians in North Britain will not put themselves under their spiritual jurisdiction. Various pamphlets have been written on each side, and the reader is referred to them for further information on the subject. A fund has been lately formed to increase the income of their clergy by subscriptions in England and Scotland, whilst they hope for a favourable introduction of their representations to the clergy and laity of Ireland.

The Reformation in England, begun under the auspices of Henry the Eighth, was greatly checked by Mary, who proceeded like a fury to re-establish Popery. In her sanguinary reign were burnt one archbishop, four bishops, twenty-one divines, eight gentlemen, one hundred and eighty-four artificers, and one hundred husbandmen, servants, and labourers; twenty-six wives, twenty widows, and nine virgins, two boys, and two infants!!! On the death of Mary, 1558, Elizabeth ascended the throne, repealed the laws which had been established in favour of Popery, and restored her supremacy. In these matters she wonderfully succeeded, since of 9,400 beneficed clergymen, about 120 only refused to comply with the Reformation. The establishment of Protestantism in England underwent various fluctuations, till the *glorious revolution* under William, in 1688, placed it on a firm and permanent foundation. The family of the Stuarts

were bitter enemies to the civil and religious liberties of their subjects, and violently attached to Popery. Dr. Goldsmith tells us, in his *History of England*, that *James the Second*, in endeavouring to convert his subjects to the Popish religion, descended so low as Colonel Kirke. But that daring and unprincipled soldier assured his majesty that he was pre-engaged, for that if ever he did change his religion, he had promised the Emperor of Morocco, when quartered at Tangiers, to turn *Mahometan*!

Mr. Gisborne, in his excellent *Familiar Survey of the Christian Religion*, has the following remarks on Church government:—"In every community or body of men, civil or ecclesiastical, some species of government is requisite for the good of the whole. Otherwise all is irregularity, and interminable confusion. How then in any particular country is the Christian church to be governed? 'Every separate congregation,' answers the *Independent*, 'is a sovereign church, amenable to no extrinsic jurisdiction, and entitled to no jurisdiction over other churches.' 'That mode of government,' replies the *Presbyterian*, 'is calculated to destroy union, co-operation, and concord among Christians. All congregations within the same, which agree in doctrine, ought to be under the general superintendence of a representative assembly, composed of their ministers and delegates.' 'Such a repre-



sentative assembly,' returns the *Episcopalian*, 'wants vigour and dispatch, and is perpetually open to tumult, and partiality, and faction. Divide the country into dioceses, and station a bishop in each, armed with sufficient authority, and restrained by adequate laws from abusing it. Such was the apostolic government of the church—such, perhaps,' he adds, 'was the government enjoined on succeeding ages.' 'Away,' cries the *Papist*, 'with these treasonable discussions. The pope, the successor of St. Peter, is by divine right the only source of ecclesiastical power, the universal monarch of the universal church!'

"Writing as I am to Protestants, I may pass by the claim of the successor of St. Peter. But the concluding words of the *Episcopalian* are of prime importance. If Christ or his apostles enjoined the uniform adoption of Episcopacy, the question is decided. Did Christ then or his apostles deliver or indirectly convey such an injunction? This topic has been greatly controverted. The fact appears to be this—that our Saviour did not pronounce upon the subject; that the apostles uniformly established a bishop in every district, as soon as the church in that district became numerous; and thus clearly evinced their judgment as to the form of ecclesiastical government most advantageous, at least in those days, to Christianity: but they left no command, which rendered Episcopacy universally

indispensible in future times, if other forms should evidently promise, through local opinions and circumstances, greater benefit to religion. Such is the general sentiment of the present church of England on the subject." Bishop Prettyman has expressed himself much after the same manner in his *Elements of Theology*\*. And as to the *Doctrinal* complection of the church of England the reader must peruse *A Refutation of Calvinism*, by the same learned Prelate.

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## DISSENTERS.

*Dissenters* from the church of England made their first appearance in Queen Elizabeth's time, when, on account of the extraordinary purity which they proposed in religious worship and conduct, they were reproached with the name of *Puritans*. They were greatly increased by the act of uniformity, which took place on Bartholomew-day, 1662, in the reign of Charles the Second. By this act, 2,000 ministers were obliged to quit the established

\* As the established church in Ireland is the same with that of England—so are also the Dissenters of much the same complection. The Papists, indeed, are very numerous there, as are likewise the Presbyterians in the North of Ireland. Abernethy, who wrote on the *Attributes* of God, and Ducal, who wrote on the *Internal Evidences* of Christianity, were ministers of eminence amongst them.

church, refusing to *conform* to certain conditions, whence they were called *Nonconformists*. An instructive and entertaining account of the lives, literature, and piety of these good men, is to be found in *Palmer's Nonconformist's Memorial*, of which work there is a new and improved edition, lately published in three volumes. Their descendants are known by the name of *Protestant Dissenters*, and rank under the three denominations of Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists.

Of the origin and progress of the Dissenters, a full account is contained in *Neal's History of the Puritans*,\* an improved edition of which work has been published by Dr. Toulmin of Birmingham, who has accompanied it with notes, in which are obviated the objections which have been made to it by Grey, Maddox, Warburton, and others. Here the historian traces, step by step, the differences which originally occasioned the separation, and an affecting narrative is given of the sufferings which our forefathers underwent in the cause of religious

\* It is remarkable, that little notice is taken in this work of *John Bunyan*, the celebrated author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; he was twelve years in Bedford goal, and therefore deserves to have been particularly mentioned, were it only for his sufferings as a *Protestant Dissenter*. But Crosby, in his *History of the Baptists*, accuses Neal of not having treated the Baptists in that work with impartiality.

liberty. A brief history of the Puritans also was published in 1772, of which the author, the Rev. J. Cornish, of Culliton, has given an enlarged and pleasing edition. The principles on which the Dissenters separate from the church of England are much the same with those on which she separates herself from the church of Rome. They may be summarily comprehended in these three: 1. The right of private judgment. 2. Liberty of Conscience. And 3. The perfection of scripture as a Christian's *only* rule of faith and practice.

The late Dr. John Taylor, of Norwich, thus expressed himself concerning the principles and worship of the Dissenters:—"The principles and worship of Dissenters are not formed upon such slight foundation as the unlearned and thoughtless may imagine. They were thoroughly considered and judiciously reduced to the standard of scripture and the writings of antiquity, by a great number of men of learning and integrity. I mean the *Bartholomew divines*, or the ministers ejected in the year 1662, men prepared to lose all, and to suffer martyrdom itself, and who actually resigned their livings (which with most of them were, under God, all that they and their families had to subsist upon), rather than sin against God and desert the cause of civil and religious liberty, which, together with serious religion, would, I am persuaded, have sunk to a very low ebb in the nation, had it not

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been for the bold and noble stand these worthies made against imposition upon conscience, prophane-ness, and arbitrary power. They had the best education *England* could afford, most of them were excellent scholars, judicious divines, pious, faithful, and laborious ministers, of great zeal for God and religion, undaunted and courageous in their Master's work, standing close to their people in the worst of times, diligent in their studies, solid, affectionate, powerful, awakening preachers, aiming at the advancement of real vital religion in the hearts and lives of men, which it cannot be denied, flourished greatly wherever they could influence. Particularly they were men of great devotion and eminent abilities in prayer, uttering, as God enabled them, from the abundance of their hearts and affections; men of divine eloquence in pleading at the throne of grace, raising and melting the affections of their bearers, and being happily instrumental in transfusing into their souls the same spirit and heavenly gift. And this was the ground of all their other qualifications; they were excellent men, because excellent, instant, and fervent in prayer. Such were the *fathers* and *first formers* of the *Dissenting interest*. *Let my soul be for ever with the souls of these men."*

The *Test Act* excludes Dissenters from filling public offices, except they take the sacrament at the established church, which some think cannot be

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consistently done by any conscientious Dissenter. Hence loud complaints have been raised respecting this exclusion, since, as members of the civil community, they are entitled to all the common privileges of that community. The *Test Act* was originally levelled against the Roman Catholics. The Dissenters have made several unsuccessful applications for its repeal. The question was warmly agitated in the House of Commons, 1787, and on each side numerous publications issued from the press. The chief argument urged for the continuance of the Test Act is, *the safety of the established church*. The principal arguments alledged for its repeal are, that it is *a prostitution of the Lord's Supper*, and that *to withhold civil rights on account of religious opinions, is a species of persecution*.

The Dissenters as a body, have not been unfruitful of great and learned men. Among their ornaments are to be ranked Baxter, Bates, Howe, Owen, Williams, Neal, Henry, Stennet, Evans, Gale, Foster, Leland, Grosvenor, Watts, Lardner, Abernethy, Doddridge, Grove, Chandler, Gill, Orton, Furneaux, Farmer, Towgood, Robinson, Price, Kippis, and Priestley. Though it may happen that among Dissenters sufficient encouragement is not given in certain cases to men of talents and integrity, yet among their more liberal denominations, it must be confessed, that a Dissenting

minister may, unawed by a conclave of cardinals—a bench of bishops—or a board of ministers—exercise in its fullest extent *the right of private judgment*, which is the pride and pleasure of the human mind. In Pierce's *Vindication of the Dissenters*, Towgood's *Letters to White*, and Palmer's *Protestant Dissenters' Catechism*, are stated the grounds upon which their dissent from the established church is founded. Lord Sidmouth's Bill designed to amend the *Toleration Act*, was on May the 21st, 1811, thrown out of the House of Lords—a most happy circumstance, for had it passed into a law, Dissenting Ministers must have been at the mercy of a *Quarter Sessions* to determine on their fitness to teach and discharge the duties of the Christian Ministry. This attack meditated against the religious liberties of the Protestant Dissenters, was felt like an electrical shock throughout the whole circle of the body it was meant to affect. The three Denominations came forward with one heart and with one soul to repel the common enemy—they met—they resolved—they petitioned—they triumphed!!—*Protestant Dissenter* and *Friend to Religious Liberty* were synonymous terms, indeed the only appellations by which they were designated on the occasion. From this enlightened and liberal union, I augur well to Divine truth. Behold! how good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity. See a SERMON

entitled *Religious Liberty the Offspring of Christianity*, preached at Worship Street, Tuesday, June the 4th, 1811, before the *Annual Assembly* of the *General Baptists*, to which are subjoined the Schedules of Lord Sidmouth's Bill, together with the Resolutions both of the General Body of Dissenting Ministers in and about the Cities of London and Westminster, and of the Deputies for protecting the Civil Rights of the Protestant Dissenters. By J. Evans, M. A. Having been one of the *Committee of Ministers*, I have in this Discourse and its appendages taken some pains to furnish the reader with information respecting a subject which deeply concerns ourselves and our posterity.

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## KIRK OF SCOTLAND.

THE members of the *Kirk of Scotland* are, strictly speaking, the only *Presbyterians* in Great Britain. Their mode of ecclesiastical government was brought thither from Geneva by *John Knox*, the celebrated Scotch Reformer, who has been styled the apostle of Scotland, for the same reason that Luther was called the *apostle of Germany*.

Contrary to the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians maintain that the church should be governed by Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies. The title Presbyterian comes from the Greek word



*Πρεσβυτερος*, which signifies senior or elder. In the Kirk of Scotland there are fifteen synods and sixty-nine presbyteries. Their articles are Calvinistic, and their General Assembly is held annually in the month of May at Edinburgh. Dreadful scenes took place in Scotland previous to the establishment of Presbyterianism in its present form at the revolution, and its confirmation in 1706, by the act of union between the two kingdoms. During the commonwealth, Presbyterianism was the established religion, but on the restoration Episcopacy was introduced in its room. So averse, however, were the Scotch to the Episcopalians, and so harsh were the measures of the Episcopalian party, that the whole country was thrown into confusion. Leighton, the most pious and moderate prelate amongst them, disgusted with the proceedings of his brethren, resigned his bishopric, and told the king, "He would not have a hand in such oppressive measures, were he sure to plant the Christian religion in an infidel country by them; much less when they tended only to alter the form of church government." On the other hand, Sharp, Archbishop of St. Andrew's, adopted violent measures, which terminated in his death. For in 1679, nine ruffians stopped his coach near St. Andrew's, assassinated him, and left his body covered with thirty-two wounds. On the monument of this unfortunate prelate, in one of the churches of St. Andrew's, I

have seen an exact representation in elegant sculpture of this tragical event. See Cruikshank's *History of the State and Sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution, with an Introduction containing the most remarkable Occurrences relating to that Church from the Reformation*. In two volumes.

It was in these troubled times that the Presbyterians drew up their famous *solemn league and covenant*, whereby they bound themselves to effect the extirpation of episcopacy; and however useful they may have found it, yet, assuredly, it was not dictated by the spirit of true religion. The Scotch church, however, is now considerably improved in sentiment and liberality, and some of their clergy stand foremost in the several departments of literature. *Robertson, Henry, Leechman, Blacklock, Gerard, Campbell, Blair, and Hunter*, all deceased within these few years, are among its principal ornaments. In a selection of sermons, entitled the *Scotch Preacher*, will be found a pleasing specimen of the pulpit compositions of the Scotch clergy, delivered on particular occasions.

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## SECEDERS.

DISSENTERS from the Kirk or Church of Scotland, call themselves *Seceders*; for as the term *Dissenters* comes from the Latin word *dissentio*,

to differ, so the appellation *Seceder* is derived from another Latin word, *secedo*, to separate or to withdraw from any body of men with which we may have been united. The Seceders are rigid Calvinists, rather austere in their manners, and severe in their discipline. Through a difference as to civil matters they are broken down into *Burghers* and *Anti-burghers*. Of these two classes the latter are the most confined in their sentiments, and associate therefore the least with any other body of Christians. The *Seceders* originated under two brothers, Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, about the year 1730. It is worthy of observation, that the Rev. George Whitfield, in one of his visits to Scotland, was solemnly reprobated by the *Seceders*, because he refused to confine his itinerant labours *wholly* to them. The reason assigned for this monopolization was, that they were EXCLUSIVELY *God's people!* Mr. Whitfield smartly replied, that *they* had therefore the *less need* of his services, for *his* aim was to turn *sinners* from the error and wickedness of their ways by preaching among *them* glad tidings of great joy.

There is also a species of Dissenters from the church of Scotland called *Relief*, whose only difference from the Kirk is, the choosing of their own pastors. They are respectable as to numbers and ability.

The Reformation in Scotland, like that in Eng-

land and Germany, struggled with a long series of opposition, and was at length gloriously triumphant. Dr. *Gilbert Stewart* closes his *History of the Reformation in North Britain* with the following animated reflections :

“ From the order and the laws of our nature, it perpetually happens that advantages are mixed with misfortune. The conflicts which led to a purer religion, while they excite under one aspect the liveliest transports of joy, create in another a mournful sentiment of sympathy and compassion. Amidst the felicities which were obtained, and the trophies which were won, we deplore the melancholy ravages of the passions, and weep over the ruins of ancient magnificence. But while the contentions and the ferments of men, even in the road to improvements and excellence, are ever destined to be polluted with mischief and blood, a tribute of the highest panegyric and praise is yet justly to be paid to the actors in the reformation. They gave way to the movements of a liberal and a resolute spirit. They taught the rulers of nations that the obedience of the subject is the child of justice, and that men must be governed by their opinions and their reason. This magnanimity is illustrated by great and conspicuous exploits, which at the same time that they awaken admiration, are an example to support and animate virtue in the hour of trial and peril. The existence of civil liberty was

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deeply connected with the doctrines for which they contended and fought. While they treated with scorn an abject and cruel superstition, and lifted and sublimed the dignity of man, by calling his attention to a simpler and wiser theology, they were strenuous to give a permanent security to the political constitution of their state. The happiest and the best interests of society were the objects for which they buckled on their armour, and to wish and to act for their duration and stability, are perhaps the most important employments of patriotism and public affection. The *Reformation* may suffer fluctuation in its forms, but, for the good and the prosperity of mankind, it is to be hoped that it is never to yield and to submit to the errors and the superstitions it overwhelmed."

Having mentioned that the church of Scotland is composed of a General Assembly, Synods, and Presbyteries—to these must be added the *Kirk Sessions*, made up of the Pastor, Ruling Elders, and Deacons; though the business of the last is to attend to the temporalities of the church. Nor ought it to be forgotten that both classes of the *Seceders* and the *Relief* body, including about three hundred ministers, are strict Presbyterians, notwithstanding their secession, or dissent from the Scotch Establishment.

## ENGLISH PRESBYTERIANS.

BUT the appellation *Presbyterian* is in England appropriated to a large denomination of Dissenters, who have no attachment to the Scotch mode of church government, any more than to Episcopacy amongst us, and therefore to this body of Christians the term *Presbyterian* in its original sense is improperly applied. How this misapplication came to pass cannot be easily determined, but it has occasioned many wrong notions, and should be rectified. English Presbyterians, as they are called, adopt the same mode of church government with the Independents, which is the next sect to be mentioned. Their chief difference from the Independents is, that they are less attached to Calvinism, and consequently admit a greater latitude of religious sentiment.

Dr. Doddridge in his *Lectures* has this paragraph on the subject, which may serve still further for its illustration: "Those who hold every *pastor* to be as a bishop or overseer of his own congregation, so that no other person or body of men have by divine institution a power to exercise any superior or pastoral office in it, may, properly speaking, be called (so far at least) *congregational*; and it is by a vulgar mistake that any such are called *Presbyterians*, for the *Presbyterian* discipline is exercised by *synods* and *assemblies*, subordinate to each

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other, and all of them subject to the authority of what is commonly called a *General Assembly*." This model of church government is to be found in Scotland, and has been already detailed under a former article in this work.

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## INDEPENDENTS.

THE *Independents*, or *Congregationalists*, deny not only the subordination of the clergy, but also all *dependency* on other assemblies. Every congregation (say they) has in itself what is necessary for its own government, and is not subject to other churches, or to their deputies. Thus this *independency* of one church with respect to another has given rise to the appellation *Independents*; though this mode of church government is adopted by the Dissenters in general. The *Independents* have been improperly confounded with the *Brownists*, for notwithstanding they may have originally sprung from them, they excel them in the moderation of their sentiments, and in the order of their discipline. The first Independent or Congregational Church in England was established by a Mr. Jacob, in the year 1616; though a Mr. Robinson appears to have been the founder of this sect.

## BROWNISTS.

THE *Brownists*, which have been just mentioned, were the followers of *Robert Brown*, a clergyman of the church of England, who lived about 1600. He inveighed against the ceremonies and discipline of the church, separated himself from her communion, and afterwards returned into her bosom. He appears to have been a persecuted man, of violent passions. He died in Northampton gaol, 1630, after boasting that he had been committed to thirty-two prisons, in some of which he could not see his hand at noon day !

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## PÆDOBAPTISTS.

BEFORE we proceed to the Baptists, it will be necessary just to remark, that *all* persons who baptize infants, are denominated *Pædobaptists*, from the Greek word Παις, which signifies *child* or *infant*, and Βαπτω, to baptize. Of course the Established Church, the Presbyterians both in Scotland and England, together with the Independents, are all *Pædobaptists*; that is, baptizers of infants or children. Their reasons for this practice are to be found in Wall, Towgood, Addington, Williams, Horsey, Edwards, and others, who have expressly written on the subject with learning and ingenuity.



They rest their arguments principally on the following circumstances :—That baptism has succeeded instead of the rite of circumcision; that *households*, probably (say they) including children, were baptized; that Jesus shewed an affectionate regard for children; and finally, that it is the means of impressing the minds of parents with a sense of the duties which they owe their offspring, upon the right discharge of which depend the welfare and happiness of the rising generation. Persons, therefore, engage themselves as *sponsors* in the Established Church, who promise that they will take care of the morals of the children; among other sects the *parents* are made answerable, who indeed are the most proper persons to undertake the arduous task, and to see it duly accomplished. Dr. Priestley published a *Letter to an Anti-pædobaptist*, in which he endeavours to prove the Baptism of Infants, from the testimony of the Fathers, to which the Rev. Job David, of Taunton, in a small pamphlet, made an able reply. These preliminary remarks were necessary to render a sketch of the *Baptists* the more intelligible. We shall therefore proceed to that denomination.

## BAPTISTS,

## GENERAL AND PARTICULAR.

THE *Baptists* are distinguished from other denominations respecting the *mode* and *subject* of baptism. They contend that this ordinance should be administered by *immersion* only, which indeed is *enjoined*, though not practised, by the church of England. They also assert, that it should be administered to those alone who *profess* their belief in the Christian religion, and avow their determination of regulating their lives by its precepts. Some of the learned, however, suppose that the controversy is not so properly whether infants or adults should be baptized, as whether the rite should be administered on the profession of our *own* faith, or on that of *another's* faith. See *Letters addressed to Bishop Hoadley*, by the late Mr. Foot, a General Baptist at Bristol.

The Baptists are divided into the *General*, who are Arminians, and into the *Particular*, who are Calvinists. Some of both classes allow *mixed communion*, by which is understood, that those who have not been baptized by *immersion* on the profession of their faith (but in their infancy, which *they* themselves deem *valid*) may sit down at the Lord's table along with those who have been thus baptized. This has given rise to some little con-

troversy on the subject. Mr. Killingworth and Mr. Abraham Booth have written against free communion; but John Bunyan, Dr. James Foster, Mr. Charles Bulkely, Mr. John Wiche, for many years a respectable General Baptist minister at Maidstone, and Mr. Robinson of Cambridge, have contended for it. It is to be regretted that such disputes should ever have arisen, since they have contributed in no small degree to injure the repose, and retard the prosperity of the Christian Church. An *Address to the Opposers of Free Communion*, written by the late venerable Micajah Towgood, will be found at the end of his *Life*, by Mr. James Manning, well worth attention\*.

The *General* Baptists have, in some of their churches, three distinct orders separately ordained—*Messengers*, *Elders*, and *Deacons*; and their *General Assembly* (when a minister preaches, and the affairs of the churches are taken into consi-

\* It is a circumstance worthy of being recorded, and the truth of which was lately confirmed to me by the Rev. Thomas Dunscombe, of Broughton in Hampshire, that a gentleman of Clapham, left a sum to be distributed among several Baptist churches, who should not forbid a Pædobaptist from sitting down with them at the Lord's table. This singular legacy displays, in a striking point of view, the liberality of the deceased, and reflects honour on his memory. The circumstance has but recently come to my knowledge, otherwise it should have been recorded in former editions.

deration) is held annually in *Worship-street, London*, on the *Tuesday in the Whitsun week*. They have thus met together for upwards of a century. Dr. John Gale, a learned General Baptist, had a famous controversy, in the beginning of the last century, with Dr. Wall, who defended the practice of baptizing infants. But there has been a more recent controversy on the subject, between Mr. Abraham Booth and Dr. Williams. The appellation *Ana-baptist*, which comes from two Greek words, and signifies to *re-baptize*, is sometimes applied to this denomination of Christians. But this is an unjust accusation, and being deemed a term of reproach, ought to be wholly laid aside. The late Mr. Robinson published a valuable work, entitled *The History of Baptism*, a few copies of which remain for sale, and to these are prefixed brief *Memoirs* of Mr. Robinson, by the author of this work.

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## ADULT BAPTISM.

THE administration of baptism to *adults* by *immersion*, has been the subject of so much ridicule and misrepresentation, that an account of it, taken from Mr. Robinson's *History of Baptism*, shall be inserted for the information of the serious reader. And as it is for this reason alone that the account

is introduced, the author cannot with truth be suspected of partiality. "The English, and most foreign Baptists, consider *a personal profession of faith*, and an *immersion* in water, essential to baptism. The profession of faith is generally made before the church at a church meeting. Some have a creed, and expect the candidate to assent to it, and to give a circumstantial account of his conversion. Others only require a person to profess himself a Christian. The former generally consider baptism as an ordinance, which initiates persons into a particular church; and they say, without breach of Christian liberty, they have a right to expect an agreement in articles of faith in their own societies. The latter only think baptism initiates into a profession of the Christian religion in general, and therefore say they have no right to require an assent to *our* creed of such as do not purpose to join our churches. They quote the baptism of the eunuch, in the 8th of Acts, in proof. There are some who have no public faith, and who both administer baptism and admit to church membership any who profess themselves Christians. They administer baptism in their own baptisteries, and in public waters.

"Not many years ago, at Whittlesford, seven miles from Cambridge, forty-eight persons were baptised in that ford of the river from which the

village takes its name. At ten o'clock of a very fine morning in May, about 1500 people of different ranks assembled together. At half past ten in the forenoon, the late Dr. Andrew Gifford, fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, sub-librarian of the British Museum, and teacher of a Baptist congregation in Eagle-street, London, ascended a moveable pulpit in a large open court-yard, near the river, and adjoining to the house of the lord of the manor. Round him stood the congregation; people on horseback, in coaches, and in carts, formed the outside semicircle; many other persons sitting in the rooms of the house, the sashes being open: all were uncovered, and there was a profound silence. The doctor first gave out a hymn, which the congregation sung. Then he prayed. Prayer ended, he took out a New Testament, and read his text—*I indeed baptise you with water unto repentance*. He observed, that the force of the preposition had escaped the notice of the translators, and that the true reading was—I indeed *baptise* or dip you *in* water *at* or *upon* repentance; which sense he confirmed by the 41st verse of the 12th of Matthew, and other passages. Then he spoke, as most Baptists do on these occasions, concerning the *nature, subject, mode, and end* of this ordinance. He closed, by contrasting the doctrine of infant sprinkling with that of believer's baptism, which being a part of Christian obedience, was supported

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by divine promises, on the accomplishment of which all good men might depend. After sermon, he read another hymn and prayed, and then came down. Then the candidates for baptism retired, to prepare themselves.

“ About half an hour after, the administrator, who that day was a nephew of the doctor’s, and admirably qualified for the work, in a long black gown of fine baize, without a hat, with a small New Testament in his hand, came down to the river side, accompanied by several Baptist ministers and deacons of their churches, and the persons to be baptized. The men came first, two and two, without hats, and dressed as usual, except that instead of coats, each had on a long white baize gown, tied round the waist with a sash. Such as had no hair, wore white cotton or linen caps. The women followed the men, two and two, all dressed neat, clean, and plain, and their gowns white linen or dimity. It was said, the garments had knobs of lead at bottom, to make them sink. Each had a long light silk cloak hanging loosely over her shoulders, a broad ribband tied over her gown beneath the breast, and a hat on her head. They all ranged themselves around the administrator at the water-side. A great number of spectators stood on the banks of the river on both sides; some had climbed and sat on the trees, many sat on horseback and in carriages, and all behaved with a decent serious-

ness, which did honour to the good sense and the good manners of the assembly, as well as to the free constitution of this country. First, the administrator read an hymn, which the people sung. Then he read that portion of scripture which is read in the Greek church on the same occasion, the history of the baptism of the eunuch, beginning at the 23d verse, and ending with the 39th. About ten minutes he stood expounding the verses, and then taking one of the men by the hand, he led him into the water, saying as he went, *See here is water, what doth hinder? If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptised.* When he came to a sufficient depth, he stopped, and with the utmost composure placing himself on the left hand of the man, his face being towards the man's shoulder, he put his right hand between his shoulders behind, gathering into it a little of the gown for hold: the fingers of the left hand he thrust under the sash before, and the man putting his two thumbs into that hand, he locked all together, by closing his hand. Then he deliberately said, *I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:* and while he uttered these words, standing wide, he gently leaned him backward, and dipped him once. As soon as he had raised him, a person in a boat fastened there for the purpose, took hold of the man's hand, wiped his face with a napkin, and led him a few steps to another attendant,



who then gave his arm, walked with him to the house, and assisted him to dress. There were many such in waiting, who, like the primitive susceptrors, assisted during the whole service. The rest of the men followed the first, and were baptized in like manner. After them the women were baptized. A female friend took off at the water-side the hat and cloak. A deacon of the church led one to the administrator, and another from him; and a woman at the water-side took each as she came out of the river, and conducted her to the apartment in the house, where they dressed themselves. When all were baptized, the administrator coming up out of the river, and standing at the side, gave a short exhortation on the honour and the pleasure of obedience to divine commands, and then with the usual benediction dismissed the assembly. About half an hour after, the men newly baptized, having dressed themselves, went from their room into a large hall in the house, where they were presently joined by the women, who came from their apartments to the same place. Then they sent a messenger to the administrator, who was dressing in his apartment, to inform him they waited for him. He presently came, and first prayed for a few minutes, and then closed the whole by a short discourse on the blessings of civil and religious liberty, the sufficiency of Scripture, the pleasures of a good conscience, the importance of a holy life, and the

prospect of a blessed immortality. This they call a *public baptism*."

A more *private* baptism takes place after a similar manner in *baptisteries*, which are in or near the places of worship: thus every convenience is afforded for the purpose. This, indeed, is now the most common way of administering the ordinance among the Baptists, either with the attendance of friends, or in the presence of the congregation. Such is *baptism by immersion*, and thus conducted, it must be pronounced significant in its nature, and impressive in its tendency. It is, however, to be wished, that the rite was on *every* occasion administered with equal solemnity. See a letter to the General Baptist Churches, for the year 1806, on the subject of *Adult Baptism*, by the Rev. *William Richards*, of Lynn, where the practice both as to *Subjects* and *Mode* is stated with ability and brevity.

The propriety of the exclusive appellation of the term *Baptists* to those who baptize *adults by immersion*, has been questioned. Hence they are by many styled *Anti-pædobaptists*, merely as opposing the validity of infant baptism. An account of the manner in which *infant baptism* is administered, should have been added, were it not so well known by its general practice, both in the established Church and among Dissenters.

THE three denominations of *Protestant Dissenters* have their own seminaries, where young men designed for the Christian ministry, are educated. Among the Presbyterians are to be reckoned the academies at York, and Caermarthen in South Wales; besides six exhibitions granted by Dr. Daniel Williams, to English Presbyterian students to be educated at Glasgow. Among the Independents are to be mentioned the academies at Wymondley house near Hitchin, Homerton, Wrexham, and Hoxton. The academy at Wymondley house was originally under the care of Dr. Philip Doddridge, of Northampton; upon his decease it was consigned over to Dr. Ashworth, of Daventry; but was afterwards removed to Northampton, where the Rev. John Horsey superintended it for many years in a manner which did credit to his talents and piety. There is also an academy of Lady Huntingdon's, formerly at Trevecka, now at Cheshunt. The Baptists have two exhibitions for students to be educated for *four* years at one of the universities in Scotland, given them by Dr. Ward, of Gresham College, the author of *The System of Oratory*\*. There is likewise an

\* As the author of this little work stands indebted to the Exhibition of Dr. *John Ward*, he wishes to pay a grateful tribute of respect to his memory. He was the son of a Dissenting minister, and born about 1679, in London. He kept an academy for many years in Tenter-alley,

academy at Bristol, generally known by the name of *The Bristol Education Society*, over which the late Dr. Caleb Evans, and his venerable father, the Rev. Hugh Evans, A. M. presided for many years with respectability, and another is just established at Mile End. *A similar institution*, under the superintendence of the author, at Islington, has been formed among the *General Baptists*, which has met with considerable encouragement. They could formerly boast of a *Gale*, a *Foster*, a *Burroughs*, a *Foot*, a *Noble*, and a *Bulkeley*. A learned education lays the foundation for a respectable Christian ministry. In Dr. Kippis's *Life of Dr. Doddridge*, prefixed to the seventh edition of his *Family Expositor*, will be found an account of the general mode of education for ministers among the Dissenters.

Mr. Palmer, in his *Nonconformist's Memorial*, speaking of Dr. Daniel Williams, says—"He gave the bulk of his estate to charitable uses, as ex-

Moorefields. In 1720, he was chosen professor of rhetoric in Gresham College, where his *System of Oratory* was delivered. In 1723, during the presidency of Sir Isaac Newton, he was elected fellow of the Royal Society; and in 1752, chosen one of its vice-presidents, in which office he continued till his death, which happened at Gresham College, October 17, 1758, in the eightieth year of his age. He published many learned works; and is allowed by all who knew him, to have been a character in which were united a diffusive benevolence and a rational piety.

cellent in their nature as they were various in their kinds, and as much calculated for the glory of God, and the good of mankind, as any that have ever been known. He left his library for public use, and ordered a convenient place to be purchased or erected, in which the books might be properly disposed of, and left an annuity for a librarian. A commodious house was accordingly erected in *Red-cross-street, Cripplegate*, where his collection of books is not only properly preserved, but has been gradually receiving large additions. This is also the place in which the body of the Dissenting ministers meet to transact their business, and is a kind of repository for paintings of Nonconformist ministers, for MSS. and other matters of curiosity and utility." The building itself belongs to the *Presbyterians*, but it is by the trustees handsomely devoted to the use of the Dissenters in general. The library, since its original endowment, has been augmented by the donations of liberal-minded persons, and, lately, part of the founder's estate is appropriated for the purpose. Were every Dissenting author, however, to send thither a copy of his publications (a measure that has been recommended and ought to be adopted), the collection would soon receive a considerable augmentation. A second edition of the catalogue, in one Volume octavo, has been lately published, with the rules respecting the use of it, prefixed. The Rev. Thomas

*Morgan* is the present librarian, and the library is open till three o'clock in the afternoon, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday excepted. A valuable *mummy* and a large *skeleton* are among the curiosities of the library.

Near to this spot also stands *Sion College*, founded by Dr. Thomas White, and of which a particular account is given in Northouck's *History of London*. Here the *London clergy* meet to transact their affairs, and it is enriched with an extensive library, and ample endowments. The building having been lately repaired, has the appearance of great respectability.

TO the foregoing *systematical* distribution of the several denominations, shall be added a FEW sects, which cannot be classed with propriety under any of the *three* general divisions which have been adopted.

## QUAKERS.

THE *Quakers* appeared in England about the year 1650. Their origin will be best given in their own words:—"The beginning of the seventeenth century is known to have been a time of great dissention in England respecting religion. Many pious persons had been dissatisfied with the settle-

ment of the Church of England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Various societies of Dissenters had accordingly arisen ; some of whom evinced their sincerity by grievous sufferings under the intolerance of those who governed church affairs\*. But these societies, notwithstanding their honest zeal, seemed to have stopped short in their progress towards a complete reformation†; and, degenerating into formality, to have left their most enlightened members still to lament the want of something more instructive and consolatory to the soul, than the most rigorous observance of their ordinances had ever produced. Thus dissatisfied and disconsolate, they were ready to follow any teacher who seemed able to direct them to that light and peace of which they felt the need. Many such in succession engaged their attention; until finding the insufficiency of them all, they withdrew from the communion of every visible church, and dwelt retired, and attentive to the inward state of their own minds : often deeply distressed for the want of that true knowledge of God, which they saw to be necessary for salvation, and for which, according to their ability, they fervently prayed. These sincere breathings of spirit being answered by the extension of some degree of heavenly consolation, they became con-

\* Sewell, p. 5, 6, ed. 1722.    † Penn, vol. v. 211, 212. ed. 1782.

vinced, that as the heart of man is the scene of the tempter's attacks, it must also be that of the Redeemer's victory. With renewed fervency, therefore, they sought his appearance in their minds; and thus being renewedly furnished with his saving light and help, they not only became instructed in the things pertaining to their own salvation, but they discovered many practices in the world, which have a shew of religion, to be nevertheless the effect of the unsubjected will of man, and inconsistent with the genuine simplicity of the truth.

“ George Fox\* was one of the first of our Friends who were imprisoned. He was confined at Nottingham in the year 1649, for having publicly opposed a preacher, who had asserted that the more sure word of prophecy, mentioned 2 Pet. i. 19. was the Scripture; George Fox declaring that it was the Holy Spirit: and in the following year, being brought before two justices in Derbyshire, one of them, scoffing at G. Fox, for having bidden him, and those about him, tremble at the word of the Lord, gave to our predecessors the name of *Quakers*,† an appellation which soon became and hath remained our most usual denomination; but they themselves adopted, and have transmitted to

\* Besse's Sufferings of the People called Quakers, ch. 6, and 29, et passim.

† Besse. Suff. 29.—Sewell, 35.



us, the endearing appellation of *Friends*." See *A Summary of the History, Doctrines, and Discipline of Friends, written at the desire of the Meeting for Sufferings in London*. This pamphlet was published at the end of a work, entitled *A Refutation of some of the more modern Misrepresentations of the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, with a Life of James Nayler*, by Joseph Gurney Bevan. Dr. Toulmin, in his *new* edition of *Neal's History of the Puritans*, has taken pains to give the public just ideas of the Quakers; it does honour to his impartiality. See also Dr. A. Rees's valuable and improved edition in Quarto, of Chambers's *Encyclopædia*, on the subject.

It is difficult to give a specific statement of their tenets; but they may be found in a well-written Apology by Robert Barclay, a learned Quaker, who died in Scotland, 1690. George Fox, the founder of this sect, was born 1624. He exhibited few articles of faith, and insisted mostly on morality, mutual charity, and the love of God. The religion and worship he recommended was simple and without ceremonies. To wait in profound silence for the influence of the Spirit, was one of the chief points he inculcated. "The tenor of his doctrine," says John Gough, "when he found himself concerned to instruct others, was to wean men from systems, ceremonies, and the outside of religion, in every form, and to lead them to an

acquaintance with themselves, by a solicitous attention to what passed in their own minds; to direct them to a principle in their own hearts, which, if duly attended to, would introduce rectitude of mind, simplicity of manners, a life and conversation adorned with every Christian virtue. Drawing his doctrine from the pure source of religious truth, the New Testament, and the conviction of his own mind, abstracted from the comments of men—he asserted the freedom of man in the liberty of the gospel, against the tyranny of custom, and against the combined powers of severe persecution, the greatest contempt and keenest ridicule. Unshaken and undismayed, he persevered in disseminating principles and practices conducive to the present and everlasting well-being of mankind, with great honesty, simplicity, and success.”\*

The Quakers have places of worship, where they regularly assemble on the first and other days of the week, though sometimes without vocal prayer, or any religious exhortation. They reject the celebration of water baptism and the Lord's Supper as outward ordinances, have no distinct order of ministers, though their speakers are under certain regulations; and being firm opposers of the Calvinistic doctrines of Election and Reprobation, are advocates of the Arminian system of doctrine, so far

\* Gough's History of the Quakers, vol. I. p. 56.

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at least as respects the universal love of God to man, in order to his salvation.

Their internal government is much admired, their own poor are supported without parochial aid, and their industry and sobriety are deserving of imitation. They also reprobate the destructive practice of war, the infamous traffic of slaves, and profess their abhorrence of religious persecution. Refusing to pay tithes as an *antichristian* imposition, they suffer the loss of their goods and of their liberty, rather than comply with the demand, and their losses are emphatically termed by them *sufferings*. Many have endured long imprisonments on that account. The Quakers object to all oaths, as having been prohibited by Christ, when he said, *swear not at all*: and their affirmation is permitted in all civil, but not in criminal cases. In the tyrannical reign of the Stuarts, the *Friends* suffered, in common with the Puritans, the severest persecution. Even the famous William Penn was tried at the Old Bailey; and his defence on the trial, an account of which is to be found in his works, is honourable to his legal knowledge, fortitude, and integrity. A cheap edition of this trial ought to be produced for general circulation. It presents a sad picture of the times, and is an eloquent comment on the wretched consequences of religious bigotry.

With regard to the resurrection of the body, they

have deemed it more safe not to determine how or when we shall be raised, yet they have a firm belief in a resurrection of the dead, and in a future state of retribution.

*Sewell*, in his History of the Society, expresses himself decidedly in behalf of a resurrection, but without determining the mode in which infinite wisdom may preserve a consciousness of identity in another stage of our existence; and Barclay, in his confession and catechism, used only the words of Scripture on the subject, without expressing the manner in which he understood them. The same remark applies to his account of the divinity of Christ, though it appears by the whole tenor of the 10th chapter of his *Catechism*, and the 17th article of his *Confession of Faith*, concerning *worship*\*, that he held worship, strictly speaking, *to be due to the Father* only; nor does he quote in either of the selections any of the texts which are supposed, also, to authorize offering up prayers to Christ; and he is wholly silent respecting the doctrine of the Trinity in his *Apology*. But it seems that William Penn was more explicit on the subject; and no writer of acknowledged reputation among them, has admitted any distinction of *persons* in the Deity, or in the mode of his existence, which in some form or other is maintained by all who can be

\* Barclay's Works, vol. I. p. 258 to 261, and 300, 8vo.

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properly termed Trinitarians. In Penn's *Sandy Foundation Shaken*, he speaks with freedom against many doctrines which are held in general estimation. The title of the book speaks for itself, and shall be transcribed:—"The Sandy Foundation Shaken, or those so generally believed and applauded doctrines, of one God subsisting in three distinct and separate persons; the impossibility of God's pardoning sin without a plenary satisfaction; the qualification of impure persons by an imputative righteousness, refuted from the authority of scripture testimonies and right reason." See a learned defence of this work by Richard Claridge, published in his posthumous works, in 1726.

It appears that Mr. Penn having in this work reprobated the leading doctrines of Calvinism, a violent outcry was raised against him. He therefore vindicated himself in a pamphlet, called *Innocency with her Open Face*, in which he says: "As for my being a *Socinian*, I must confess I have read of one *Socinus*, of (what they call) a noble family in Sene, Italy, who about the year 1574, being a young man, voluntarily did abandon the glories, pleasures, and honours of the Great Duke of Tuscany's court at Florence, that noted place for all worldly delicacies, and became a perpetual exile for his conscience, whose parts, wisdom, gravity, and just behaviour, made him the most famous with the Polonian and Transylvanian churches; but

I was never baptized into *his* name, and therefore deny that reproachful epithet; and if in any thing I acknowledge the verity of his doctrine, it is for the truth's sake, of which, in many things, he had a clearer prospect than most of his contemporaries: but not therefore a Socinian any more than a son of the English church, whilst esteemed a Quaker, because I justify many of *her* principles since the Reformation against the Romish church." But we will add another paragraph, where Mr. Penn's principles are epitomised. "And to shut up my apology for religious matters, that all may see the simplicity, scripture doctrine, and phrase of my faith, in the most important matters of eternal life, I shall here subjoin a short *confession*:

"I sincerely own and unfeignedly believe (by virtue of the sound knowledge and experience received from the gift of that holy unction and divine grace inspired from on high) in one holy, just, merciful, almighty, and eternal God, who is the father of all things; that appeared to the holy patriarchs and prophets of old, at sundry times and in divers manners;—and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the everlasting Wisdom, divine Power, true Light, only Saviour, and Preserver of all; the same one holy, just, merciful, almighty, and eternal God, who in the fulness of time took and was manifest in the flesh, at which time he preached (and his disciples after him) the everlasting gospel of repentance, and

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promise of remission of sins, and eternal life to all that heard and obeyed; who said, he that is with you (in the flesh) shall be in you (by the spirit); and though he left them (as to the flesh), yet not comfortless, for he would come to them again (in the spirit); for a little while, and they should not see him (as to the flesh; again, a little while, and they should see him (in the spirit); for the Lord (Jesus Christ) is that spirit, a manifestation whereof is given to every one, to profit with all;—in which *Holy Spirit* I believe, as the same almighty and eternal God, who, as in those times, he ended all shadows, and became the infallible guide to them that walked therein, by which they were adopted heirs and co-heirs of glory; so am I a living witness, that the same holy, just, merciful, almighty, and eternal God, is now, as then (after this tedious night of idolatry, superstition, and human inventions, that hath overspread the world) gloriously manifested to discover and save from all iniquity, and to conduct unto the holy land of pure and endless peace; in a word, to tabernacle in men. And I also firmly believe, that without repenting and forsaking of past sins, and walking in obedience to the heavenly voice, which would guide into all truth, and establish there, remission and eternal life can never be obtained; but unto them that fear his name and keep his commandments, *they*, and *they only*, shall have a right to the tree of life; for

whose name's sake, I have been made willing to relinquish and forsake all the vain fashions, enticing pleasures, alluring honours, and glittering glories of this transitory world, and readily to accept the portion of a fool from this deriding generation, and become a man of sorrow, and a perpetual reproach to my familiars; yea, and with the greatest cheerfulness, can obsignate and confirm (with no less zeal, than the loss of whatsoever this doating world accounts dear) this faithful confession; having my eye fixed upon a more enduring substance and lasting inheritance, and being most infallibly assured, that when time shall be no more, I shall (if faithful hereunto) possess the mansions of eternal life, and be received into his everlasting habitation of rest and glory."

This is an explicit declaration of the principles of Quakerism, taken from the works of *William Penn*; because of all their writers, he is in general the most perspicuous, and as to his character, he possesses a high respectability.

Indeed, there seems to be a much greater uniformity in their dress than in their opinions, though it is probable that the generality of them adhere to the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. As a proof of the diversity of opinion amongst them, we may refer to the late proceedings of the society against *Hannah Barnard*, a celebrated speaker from Hudson, New York, in North America. For



her opinions respecting the Jewish wars, and the Miraculous Conception and miracles of Christ, was first silenced, and afterwards in America disowned as a member. This produced a controversy in print. The publications on the part of Hannah Barnard are, "An Appeal to the Society of Friends on the Primitive Simplicity of their Christian Principles and Church Discipline," &c. in three parts, with a *Sequel*; "A Vindication of Scriptural Unitarianism, and some other primitive Christian Doctrines," &c. in reply to *Vindex*; and lastly, "Christian Unitarianism vindicated," in reply to John Bevens, jun. written by Thomas Foster, who calls himself *Verax*. Those on behalf of the *Friends* are, first, "Some Tracts relating to the Controversy between Hannah Barnard and the Society of Friends," published by an anonymous author under the signature of *Christicola*. The second is also anonymous, entitled "An Examination of the first part of an Appeal, &c. by *Vindex*." The last and most diffuse is entitled "A Defence of the Christian Doctrines of the Society of Friends, against the charge of Socinianism; and its Church Discipline vindicated, in answer to a writer who stiles himself *Verax*, &c. by John Bevens, jun."

There are seven yearly meetings among them, by each of which all rules and advices are formed for the general government of the society in the country where they are respectively established.

And no member of the society is precluded from attending, or partaking in the deliberations of these assemblies, which are nevertheless strictly speaking constituted of representatives, by regular appointment from each quarterly meeting. The following are the seven yearly meetings: 1. London, to which come representatives from Ireland; 2. New England; 3. New York; 4. Pennsylvania and New Jersey; 5. Maryland; 6. Virginia; 7. The Carolinas and Georgia. The form and colour of their clothes, together with their modes of salutation, though they themselves consider them as most consistent with that simplicity and gravity which the Gospel inculcates, have been thought to savour of affectation; they certainly exhibit a striking contrast to the frippery and courtesy of modern times. At Ackworth they have a respectable school, to which Dr. Fothergill left legacies, and where about one hundred and eighty boys, and one hundred and twenty girls, are educated. Towards the close of the sixteenth century, William Penn, who founded Pennsylvania, introduced and established a colony of them in America. His treaty with the Indians on that occasion, has formed a subject for the pencil, and reflects immortal honour on his memory.

In addition to the treatises mentioned as written by the *Friends*, the reader is referred to the fol-

lowing works: "The Faith of the People called Quakers in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," &c. by Henry Tuke; "The Principles of Religion as professed by the Society of Christians usually called Quakers," &c. by the same Author—"Thoughts on Reason and Revelation," &c. by Joseph Gurney Bevan. But the work which has most excited the public attention, and perhaps because the Author is not one of the Society, is *Clarkson's Portraiture of Quakerism*, in three volumes 8vo. It is pleasingly written, and contains much information respecting them. Some, indeed, are inclined to think that the society is here described, *rather as they ought to be, than as they are*; but the reader is recommended to the perusal of the work itself, when he will have it in his power to form his own judgment respecting its justness and fidelity. Mr. C. calls the Sentiments of the Friends respecting *Government, Oaths, War*, and the *Maintenance of a Gospel Ministry*, the *Four great Tenets of the Society*. See also *Devotional and Doctrinal Extracts from Epistles of the YEARLY MEETINGS in London of the People called Quakers*, from the year 1678 to 1810, dedicated to the Friends, and especially to the Rising Generation among them.

I have thus endeavoured to state at some length the doctrines and views of *Quakerism*, because its advocates have been subjected to gross misrepresen-

tations. Many have said they are *a species of Deists*, exalting their natural light above the scripture, whilst others have deemed them a kind of *Enthusiasts*, violently enslaved by their impulses and feelings. Persons, who entertain any of these opinions concerning them, will perceive from the above account, that though their sentiments are very peculiar, as are also their manners, yet we have every reason to suppose them sincere in their professions, and upon the whole, steadily governed by the prospects of another world.\*

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## METHODISTS,

BOTH CALVINISTIC AND ARMINIAN.

THE *Methodists* in this country form a large part of the community. In the year 1729, they sprang up at Oxford, under Mr. Morgan, (who soon after died) and under Mr. John Wesley. In the month of November of that year, the latter being then fellow of Lincoln College, began to spend some evenings in reading the Greek New Testament along with Charles Wesley, student, Mr. Morgan, commoner, of Christ Church, and Mr.

\* Since the former sheet was thrown off, I have learnt with pleasure, that a *cheap edition* of PENN'S *Trial* has been printed by Mr. B. Flower, and is sold by Jones, Newgate Street.

Kirkman, of Merton College. Next year, two or three of the pupils of Mr. John Wesley, and one pupil of Mr. Charles Wesley, obtained leave to attend these meetings. Two years after, they were joined by Mr. Ingham, of Queen's College, Mr. Broughton, of Exeter, and Mr. James Hervey; and in 1735, they were joined by the celebrated Mr. Whitfield, then in his eighteenth year. They soon obtained the name of *Methodists*, from the exact regularity of their lives; which gave occasion to a young gentleman of Christ Church, to say,—“Here is a new sect of *Methodists* sprung up!” alluding to a sect of ancient physicians, who practised medicine by *method* or regular rules, in opposition to quackery or empiricism. Thus was the term *Methodists* originally applied to this body of Christians, on account of the *methodical* strictness of their lives; but it is indeed now, by some, indiscriminately appropriated to every individual who manifests a more than ordinary concern for the salvation of mankind.

These heads differing soon afterwards in religious sentiments, their respective followers distributed themselves into two parties; the one under Mr. George Whitfield, the other under Messrs. John and Charles Wesley. Educated at Oxford, these leaders still continued to profess an attachment to the articles and liturgy of the established church, though they more commonly adopted the mode of

worship which prevails among the Dissenters. Upon their being excluded from the pulpits in many churches, they took to preaching in the fields; and from the novelty of the thing, in conjunction with the fervour of their exertions, they were attended by some *thousands* of people! In their public labours, Mr. Whitfield having a most sonorous voice, was remarkable for an engaging and powerful eloquence; whilst Mr. John Wesley, being less under the influence of his passions, possessed, both in writing and preaching, a perspicuous and commanding simplicity. Even their enemies confess that they contributed in several places to reform the lower classes of the community. The *colliers* at Kingswood, near Bristol, and the *tinners* in Cornwall, were greatly benefited by their exertions. In consequence of their attention to the religion of Jesus, by the instrumentality of these preachers, many of them rose to a degree of respectability, and became valuable members of society. The followers of Mr. Wesley are *Arminians*, though some of his preachers incline to *Baxterianism*. The followers of Mr. Whitfield are *Calvinists*, and were patronized by the late Countess Dowager of Huntingdon, to whom Mr. Whitfield was chaplain, and who was a lady of great benevolence and piety. Lady Erskine (a near relation of the late lord Chancellor) took her situation, and was said to be equally attentive to the concerns of

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this part of the religious community. She is lately deceased. With respect to the splitting of the Methodists into Calvinists and Arminians, it happened so far back as the year 1741; the former being for *particular*, and the latter for *universal* redemption. Of the number of the Methodists, various statements have been given; but no account has ever yet reached me which bore the marks of accuracy.

Both Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitfield were indefatigable in promoting their own views of the Christian religion, notwithstanding all the reproaches with which they were stigmatized. It is well known, that for this purpose Mr. Whitfield went over several times to America. Mr. Whitfield, indeed, established an orphan-house in Georgia, for which he made collections in this country, and which was since converted into a college for the education of young men, designed chiefly for the ministry. To this paragraph the American editor of the Sketch has added:—"It has been lately burnt, and the whole of the benefice added to it is in possession of the state, a just judgment for purchasing slaves to support a charitable institution!"

The distinguishing principles of Methodism are, *salvation by faith in Jesus Christ: perceptible, and in some cases instantaneous conversion; and an assurance* of reconciliation to God, with which,

they say, the *new birth*, or *being born again*, is inseparably attended. On these doctrines they lay the utmost stress; and much curious information respecting these topics will be found in Dr. Haweis's *History of the Church of Christ*.\* Several persons have written the Life of Mr. Wesley; there is one by Mr. Hampson, another by Dr. Whitehead, and a third by Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore. Mr. Whitfield's Life was drawn up by the late Dr. Gillies, of Glasgow. Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitfield both published an account of their itinerant labours in this kingdom and in America. These sketches are entitled *Journals*, and though containing many strange things, serve to illustrate the principles and progress of Methodism. To conclude this article of the *Methodists*, in the words of Mr. Hampson, in his *Memoirs of Mr. Wesley*—"If they possess not much knowledge, which however we do not know to be the case, it is at least certain they are not deficient in zeal, and without any passionate desire to imitate their example, we may at least commend their endeavours for the general good. Every good man will contemplate with pleasure the operation of the spirit of reformation, whether foreign or domestic, and will rejoice in every attempt to propagate Christianity in the barbarous parts of

\* This work, it is to be regretted, is deficient in references to authorities, the *soul* and *substance* of history.



the world; an attempt, which, if in any tolerable degree successful, will do infinitely more for their civilization and happiness, than all the united energies of the philosophical infidels, those boasted benefactors of mankind." See *A Portraiture of Methodism*, by the Rev. Joseph Nightingale, a work of considerable ability, and replete with information respecting the internal government and discipline of the Methodists.

Dr. Priestley published a volume of Mr. Wesley's Letters, just after his decease, prefaced with an Address to the Methodists; where, after having expostulated with them respecting their peculiarities, he gives them credit for their zeal and activity. The *Methodists* have found an advocate in William Wilberforce, Esq. M. P. who pleads their cause at some length in his Treatise on *Vital Christianity*.

Before this article relative to the Methodists is closed, it may be proper just to add; that a communication has been made me, respecting the *Revival Meetings* among the Wesleyan Methodists, where certain persons, under the influence of a religious phrenzy, occasion, by their groanings and vociferations, an uncommon degree of tumult and confusion. The more sensible, however, of the Methodists reprobate these disgraceful scenes.

Dr. Adam Clarke, the most learned and liberal of the Wesleyan Methodists, has just published the

first part of a *Commentary on the Bible*, in which he suggests that a *Monkey*, and not a *Serpent* as is usually thought, deceived our first Parents.—This has not passed without animadversions—See *The Ophion*, or the Theology of the Serpent, by John Bellamy—which made its first appearance in Valpy's *Classical Journal*, a periodical publication, distinguished for its learned lucubrations, and of high respectability.

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## NEW METHODISTS.

THE *New Methodist Connexion*, among the followers of Mr. Wesley, separated from the original Methodists in 1797. The grounds of this separation they declare to be *church-government*, and not doctrines, as affirmed by some of their opponents. They object to the old Methodists, for having formed a hierarchy or priestly corporation; and say, that in so doing, they have robbed the people of those privileges, which, as members of a Christian church, they are entitled to by reason and Scripture. The *New Methodists* have therefore attempted to establish every part of their church government on popular principles, and profess to have united as much as possible the ministers and the people in every department of it. This is quite contrary to the original government of the Methodists, which, in the most important cases, is con-



fined only to the ministers. This, indeed, appears most plainly, when their conference or yearly meeting is considered; for in this meeting, no person, who is not a *travelling preacher*, has ever been suffered to enter as a member of it; and, indeed, this is the point to which the preachers have always stedfastly adhered with the utmost firmness and resolution, and on which the division at present entirely rests. They are also upbraided by the New Methodists, for having abused the power they have assumed: a great many of *these* abuses the New Methodists have formally protested against, which are enumerated in various publications, and particularly in the *Preface to the Life* of one of their deceased friends, Mr. *Alexander Kilham*. Hence these New Methodists have been sometimes denominated *Kilhamites*.

Though these are the points on which the division seems principally to have rested, yet there are several other things that have contributed to it. It is frequently easy to foresee and to calculate the future changes in society that the lapse of time will produce; and in no instance is this observation better warranted than in this division, which most persons have long expected. The old attachment of the Methodists to the Established Church, which originated in Mr. Wesley, and was cherished by him and many of the preachers by all possible means, and also the dislike to these



sentiments in many others of the preachers, and of the societies, were never-failing subjects of contention. As all parties are distinguished in their contests by some badge or discriminating circumstance, so here *the receiving, or not receiving*, the Lord's Supper, in the *Established Church*, was long considered as the criterion of Methodistical zeal or disaffection. Thus the rupture that had been long foreseen by intelligent persons, and for which the minds of the Methodists had been undesignedly prepared, became inevitable, when Mr. Wesley's influence no longer interfered. Soon after Mr. Wesley's death, many things had a tendency to displease the societies, and bring forward the division. Many petitions having been sent by the societies to the preachers, requesting to have the Lord's Supper administered to them in their own chapels, the people had the mortification to find that this question was decided by *lot*, and not by the use of reason and serious discussion!

The *New Methodists* profess to proceed upon liberal, open, and ingenuous principles, in the construction of their plan of church government; and their ultimate decision in all disputed matters, is in their popular annual assembly, chosen, by certain rules, from among the preachers and societies. These professions are at least generous and liberal; but as this sect has yet continued for only a short season, little can be said of it for the present. It

becomes matter of curious conjecture and speculation, how far the leading persons among them will act agreeably to their present liberal professions. If they should become firmly established in power and influence, and have the opportunity of acting otherwise, they have at least the advantage of the example of their late brethren, and of Dr. Priestley's remarks upon them. Speaking of the leading men among the Methodists, the doctor says —“ Finding themselves by degrees at the head of a large body of people, and in considerable power and influence, they must not have been *men*, if they had not felt the love of power gratified in such a situation; and they must have been *more than men*, if their subsequent conduct had not been influenced by it.” A shrewd hint, that Dr. P. thought the Methodists had been too remiss in their attention to their liberties, *which they ought to convey down entire and unmutilated to posterity*\*.

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## JUMPERS.

ORIGINALLY this singular practice of *jumping* during the time allotted for religious worship and instruction, was confined to the people called

\* This article was sent to the editor by a correspondent at Nottingham, and is inserted with a few alterations and additions.

Methodists in Wales, the followers of Harris, Rowland, Williams, and others, known in England by the appellation, of the *Evangelical Clergy*. The practice began in the western part of the country, about the year 1760. It was soon after defended by Mr. William Williams (the Welch poet, as he is sometimes styled) in a pamphlet, which was patronized by the abettors of jumping in religious assemblies, but viewed by the seniors and the grave with disapprobation. However, in the course of a few years, the advocates of groaning and loud talking, as well as of loud singing, repeating the same line or stanza over and over thirty or forty times, became more numerous, and were found among some of the other denominations in the principality, and continue to this day. Several of the more zealous itinerant preachers in Wales, recommended the people to cry out *Gogoniant* (the Welch word for *glory*) *Amen*, &c. &c. to put themselves in violent agitations; and finally, to *jump* until they were quite exhausted, so as often to be obliged to fall down on the floor, or on the field where this kind of worship was held. If any thing in the profession of religion, that is absurd and unreasonable, were to surprise us, it would be the censure that was cast upon those who gently attempted to stem this tide, which threatened the destruction of true religion as a *reasonable service*. Where the essence of true religion is placed in

customs and usages, which have no tendency to sanctify the several powers through the medium of the understanding, we ought not to be surprised, when we contemplate instances of extravagance and *apostacy*. Human nature, in general, is not capable of such exertions for any length of time, and when the spirits become exhausted, and the heat kindled by sympathy is subsided, the unhappy persons sink into themselves, and seek for support in intoxication. It is not to be doubted but there are many sincere and pious persons to be found among this class of people—men who think they are doing God's service, whilst they are the victims of fanaticism. These are the objects of compassion, and doubtless will find it in God. But it is certain, from incontestible facts, that a number of persons have attached themselves to those religious societies, who place a very disproportioned stress on the practice of *jumping*, from suspicious motives. The theory and practice of such a religion are easily understood; for the man who possesses an unblushing confidence, and the greatest degree of muscular energy, is likely to excel in bodily exercise. Upon the whole, it is probable, as such an exercise has no countenance in reason or revelation, that it has been, and is still, productive of more evil than good. Many of the ministers who have been foremost in encouraging *jumping*, seemed to have nothing in view but the gratification of their vanity, inflaming the passions

of the multitude by extravagant representations of the character of the Deity, the condition of man, and design of the Saviour's mission. The minister that wishes *not to study* to shew himself approved of God, has only to favour *jumping*, with its appendages; for as reason is out of the question in such a religion, *he* can be under no fear of shocking it. It is some consolation to real religion, to add, that this practice is on the decline, as the more sober or conscientious, who were at first at a loss to judge where this practice might carry them, have seen its pernicious tendency.

Such is the account of the JUMPERS, which, with a few alterations, has been transmitted me by a respectable minister, who frequently visits the principality. It is to be hoped, that the exercise of common sense will in time recover them from these extravagant ecstasies, which pain the rational friends of revelation, and yield matter of exultation to the advocates of infidelity.

About the year 1785, I myself happened very accidentally to be present at a meeting, which terminated in *jumping*. It was held in the open air, on a Sunday evening, near Newport, in Monmouthshire. The preacher was one of Lady Huntingdon's students, who concluded his sermon with the recommendation of *jumping*; and to allow him the praise of consistency, he got down from the chair on which he stood, and jumped along with them. The



arguments he adduced for this purpose were, that David danced before the ark, that the babe leaped in the womb of Elizabeth, and that the man whose lameness was removed, *leaped* and praised God for the mercy which he had received! He expatiated on these topics with uncommon fervency, and then drew the inference, that *they* ought to shew *similar expressions* of joy, for the blessings which Jesus Christ had put into their possession. He then gave an empassioned sketch of the sufferings of the Saviour, and hereby roused the passions of a few around him into a state of violent agitation. About nine men and seven women, for some little time, rocked to and fro, groaned aloud, and then *jumped* with a kind of frantic fury. Some of the audience flew in all directions; others gazed on in silent amazement! They all gradually dispersed, except the *jumpers*, who continued their exertions from eight in the evening to near eleven at night. I saw the conclusion of it; they at last kneeled down in a circle, holding each other by the hand, while one of them prayed with great fervour, and then *all* rising up from off their knees, departed. But previous to their dispersion, they wildly pointed up towards the sky, and reminded one another that they should soon meet *there*, and be *never* again separated! I quitted the spot with astonishment. Such disorderly scenes cannot be of any service to the deluded individuals, nor can they prove bene-

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ficial to society. Whatever credit we may and ought to allow this class of Christians for good intentions, it is impossible not to speak of the practice itself, without adopting terms of unqualified disapprobation. The reader is referred to *Bingley's* and *Evans's Tour through Wales*, (the latter author is a clergyman at Bristol), where as many particulars are detailed respecting the *Jumpers* his curiosity will receive a still farther gratification. It pains the author of the present work, that he has it not in his power to give a more favourable account of them. The decline of so unbecoming a practice will, it is to be hoped, be soon followed by its utter extinction.

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## UNIVERSALISTS.

THE *Universalists*, properly so called, are those who believe, that as Christ died for all, so, before he shall have delivered up his mediatorial kingdom to the Father, *all* shall be brought to a participation of the benefits of his death, in their restoration to holiness and happiness. Their scheme includes a reconciliation of the tenets of Calvinism and Arminianism, by uniting the leading doctrines of both, as far as they are found in the scriptures: from which union they think the sentiment of Universal restoration naturally flows.

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Thus they reason:—"The Arminian proves from Scripture, that God is love; that he is good to all; that his tender mercy is over all his works; that he gave his son for the world; that Christ died for the world; even for the whole world; and that God will have all men to be saved.

"The Calvinist proves also from Scripture, that God is without variableness or shadow of turning; that his love, like himself, alters not; that the death of Christ will be efficacious towards all for whom it was intended; that God will perform all his pleasure, and that his council shall stand. The union of these scriptural principles, is the final restoration of all men.

"Taking the principles of the Calvinists and Arminians separately, we find the former teaching, or at least inferring, that God *doth* not love all; but that he made the greater part of men to be endless monuments of his wrath: the latter declaring the love of God to all; but admitting his *final failure* of restoring the greater part. The God of the former is great in power and wisdom, but deficient in goodness, and capricious in his conduct: who that views the character can sincerely love it? The God of the latter is exceeding good; but deficient in power and wisdom: who can trust such a being? If, therefore, both Calvinists and Arminians love and trust the Deity, it is not under the character which their several systems ascribe to him;

but they are constrained to hide the imperfections which their views cast upon him, and boast of a God, whose *highest glory* their several schemes will not admit."

The Universalists teach the doctrine of *election*; but not in the exclusive Calvinistic sense of it: they suppose that God has chosen some for the good of all; and that his final purpose towards all, is intimated by his calling his elect the *first* born and the *first* fruits of his creatures, which, say they, implies other branches of his family, and a future in-gathering of the harvest of mankind.

They teach also that the righteous shall have part in the first resurrection, shall be blessed and happy, and be made priests and kings to God and to Christ in the millennial kingdom, and that over them the second death shall have no power; that the wicked will receive a punishment apportioned to their crimes; that punishment itself is a mediatorial work, and founded upon mercy; consequently, that it is a means of humbling, subduing, and finally reconciling the sinner to God.

They add, that the words rendered *everlasting*, *eternal*, *for ever*, and *for ever and ever*, in the Scriptures, are frequently used to express the duration of things that have ended, or must end; and if, it is contended, that these words are sometimes used to express *proper eternity*, they answer, that then the *subject* with which the

words are connected, must determine the sense of them; and as there is nothing in the nature of future punishment which can be rendered as a reason why it should be endless, they infer that the above words ought always to be taken in a limited sense when connected with the infliction of misery.

The Universalists have to contend on the one hand with such as hold the eternity of future misery, and on the other with those who teach that *destruction or extinction of being* will be the final state of the wicked. In answer to the latter, they say, "that before we admit that God is under the necessity of striking any of his rational creatures out of being, we ought to pause and enquire—

"Whether such an act is consistent with the scriptural character of the Deity, as possessed of all possible wisdom, goodness and power?

"Whether it would not contradict many parts of Scripture; such, for instance, as speak of the restitution of all things—the gathering together of all things in Christ—the reconciliation of all things to the Father, by the blood of the cross—the destruction of death, &c." These texts, they think, are opposed equally to endless misery, and to final destruction. Be it recollected also,

"Whether those who will be finally destroyed, are not in a worse state through the mediation of Christ, than they would have been without it?

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This question is founded on a position of the friends of destruction, viz. that extinction of being, without a resurrection, would have been the only punishment of sin, if Christ had not become the resurrection and the life to men. Consequently, the resurrection and future punishment spring from the system of mediation: but, they ask, is the justification to life, which came upon all men in Christ Jesus, nothing more than a resurrection to endless death to millions?

“Whether the word *destruction* will warrant such a conclusion? It is evident that destruction is often used in Scripture to signify a cessation of present existence only, without any contradiction of the promises that relate to a future universal resurrection. They think, therefore, that they ought to admit an universal restoration of men, notwithstanding the future destruction which is threatened to sinners:\* because, say they, the Scripture teaches both.”

They also think the doctrine of *destruction*, in the above acceptance of it, includes two considerable difficulties. The Scriptures uniformly teach degrees of punishment, according to transgression; but does *extinction of being* admit of this? Can the greatest of sinners be more effectually destroyed

\* See Vidler's Notes on Winchester's Dialogues on the Restoration, fourth edition, p. 176.

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than the least?—Again, we are taught that, however dark any part of the divine conduct may appear in the present state, yet justice will be clear and decisive in its operations hereafter; but the doctrine of destruction (in their judgment) does not admit of this; for what is the surprising difference betwixt the moral character of the *worst* good man, and the *best* bad man, that the portion of the one should be endless life, and that of the other endless death?

They suppose the universal doctrine to be most consonant to the perfections of the Deity—most worthy of the character of Christ, as the mediator; and that the Scriptures cannot be made consistent with themselves, upon any other plan. They teach that ardent love to God, peace, meekness, candour, and universal love to men, are the natural result of their views."

This doctrine is not new. Origen, a Christian father, who lived in the third century, wrote in favour of it. St. Augustine, of Hippo, mentions some divines in his day, whom he calls the merciful doctors, who held it. The German Baptists, many of them, even before the Reformation, propagated it. The people called Tunkers, in America, descended from the German Baptists, mostly hold it. The Mennonites, in Holland, have long held it. In England, about the latter end of the seventeenth century, Dr. Rust, Bishop of Dro-

more, in Ireland, published *A Letter of Resolutions concerning Origen, and the chief of his Opinions*, in which it has been thought he favoured the Universal Doctrine, which Origen held. And Mr. Jeremiah White wrote his book in favour of the same sentiments soon afterwards. The Chevalier Ramsay, in his elaborate work of the *Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion*, espouses it. Archbishop Tillotson, in one of his sermons, supposes future punishment to be of limited duration, as does Dr. Burnet, master of the Charter-House, in his book on the state of the dead.

But the writers of late years, who have defended the subject most fully, are Dr. Newton, Bishop of Bristol, in his *Dissertations*; Mr. Stonehouse, Rector of Islington; Dr. Chauncy, of Boston, in America; Dr. Hartley, in his profound work on Man; Mr. Purves, of Edinburgh; Mr. Elhanan Winchester, in his *Dialogues on Universal Restoration*, a new edition of which, with explanatory notes, has been published by Mr. William Vidler. See the *Universalist's Miscellany*, now entitled the *Monthly Repository of Theology and general Literature*; containing many valuable papers for and against Universal Restoration, where the controversy on the subject between Mr. Vidler and Mr. Fuller, will be found. But Mr. Fuller's Letters have been since printed separately, as well



as Mr. Vidler's Letters to Mr. Fuller, on the Universal Restoration, with a statement of facts attending that controversy, and some strictures on Scrutator's Review. The Rev. Mr. Browne, a clergyman of the church of England, has produced an Essay on the subject. Mr. R. Wright, of Wismbeach, has also written a tract, called *The Eternity of Hell Torments Indefensible*, in reply to Dr. Ryland. The late Mr. N. Scarlett likewise published a new translation of the Testament, in which the Greek term *αιων*, in the singular and plural, is rendered *age* and *ages*; and in his Appendix proposed that its derivative, *αιωνιος*, should be rendered *age-lasting*, instead of everlasting and eternal.

For still further information, the reader is referred to a critical work, entitled *An Essay on the Duration of a Future State of Punishment and Rewards*, by John Simpson, who has written several excellent practical pieces for the illustration of Christianity.

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## PHILADELPHIAN UNIVERSALISTS.

AMONG the professors of Universal Salvation which have appeared in the last century, is to be ranked a Mr. JAMES RELLY, who first commenced the ministerial character in connection with the late Mr. George Whitfield, and with the same sen-

timents as are generally maintained at the Tabernacle. He was considered and received with great popularity. Upon a change of his views, he encountered reproach, and of course, was soon pronounced an enemy to godliness, &c. It appears that he became convinced of the union of mankind to God, in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and upon this persuasion, he preached a finished salvation, called by the Apostle Jude, "the Common Salvation." The relation and unity of the first and second Adam unto God, the author and fountain of all things, was the foundation of those sentiments he continued to maintain during his life;—and he was followed by a considerable number of persons, who were convinced of the propriety of his views. Since his death, his sentiments have been retained by such as were attached to them in sincerity. Their own account is the following—"The first great object of our consideration being God, the Creator and Author of all things, we believe he is unchangeable in his nature and attributes, and consequently cannot stand in need, or be the subject of appeasement towards any creature that he has formed.—We believe also, that man was put forth by his power in a state subject to vanity, and became like the vessel that is marred in the hand of the potter; but that this so far from reflecting dishonour on God, became the means of manifesting the riches, yea, the exceeding

riches of his wisdom and mercy, in the renovation and reconciliation of all things in Jesus Christ our Lord.

We believe that sin is not a mere transgression of a law which being forgiven all is well, but is a disease, a mortal disease, for which God neither can, nor will take any bribe by way of satisfaction, either at our hands, or any other. Hence we understand atonement to be a covering for human nakedness and shame,—not a veil to hide sin from the eyes of God or man—hence we believe that no punishments, short or protracted, can have any share in the purification of man, because as sin is a malady under which the sinner labours, it cannot be removed by any other remedy but that which is adapted to its nature. If it is curvity of nature it must be made straight; if deafness, if blindness, lameness, leprosy, or the like, it can only be cured by unstopping the deaf ear, opening the blind eye, restoring strength to the withered limb, and so in the same proportion to every other defect.—We believe also, that in the gift of Jesus Christ our Lord, all that is necessary to heal the hurt of his people is given, and although torment may be endured while ignorant of this great Saviour and Salvation, it is the unavoidable consequence of darkness and unbelief, and not a punishment inflicted of God on account thereof.

We believe that all things are of God, and that

he has elected or appointed some to the knowledge of the truth as a kind of first fruits of his creatures, but that their separation is not to the exclusion of their brethren from the heavenly inheritance, but a pledge and earnest of the following harvest.

We believe that every institution of God by Moses, of sacrifices, of meats, of drinks, or of writings, have had their spirit and accomplishment in Christ; hence we cannot submit to the observation of ordinances, which would be only building again the things that are destroyed, and thereby making ourselves transgressors.

We believe that as all evil was introduced into human nature by one man, who is of the earth earthly, so must it be expelled by one who is from heaven and therefore heavenly—and that too by like means, viz. by a real and physical union with him, in which the branch must partake of the nature of the tree whether good or evil.

We believe therefore a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, (or believer and unbeliever,) in which characters they must appear before God, either under acquittal of conscience or condemnation of mind; the latter being the inseparable consequence of darkness, ignorance, and unbelief, must remain till the true light and revelation of the divine mercy break in on this chaotic state of nature—and thus the deliverance of the creature (first

and last) from bondage will be of God, and sound the song of "Glory to God in highest," and thus "every knee shall bow in the name of Jesus."—Amen.

N. B. The Congregation meet on Sundays, morning at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and half after six o'clock in the evening. The place of meeting bears the name of the *Philadelphian Chapel*, Windmill Street, Finsbury Square.

A Mr. Murray, belonging to this society, emigrated to America previous to about the time of the war. He preached the same sentiments at Boston and elsewhere, and was appointed chaplain to General Washington. There are a number of adherents at Boston, Philadelphia, and other parts. Mr. RALLY published several works, the principal of which were, "Union"—"The Trial of Spirits"—"Christian Liberty"—"One Baptism"—"The Salt of Sacrifice"—"Anti-christ Resisted"—"Letters on Universal Salvation"—"The Cherubimical Mystery"—"Hymns," &c. &c. Messrs. Rait, Rooks, Jeffery, &c. speak from time to time. The late Mr. Coward published two little treatises, entitled "Deism traced to its Source," and "The Comparison; or, the Gospel preached of God to the Patriarchs," compared with the gospel preached in the present day. There are also some of those of the same sentiments in other parts of the kingdom,

and particularly at and in the vicinity of Plymouth-Dock, and Plymouth, in Devonshire.\*

THE writers who have of late particularly advertised upon the doctrine of Universal Restoration, are, in America, President Edwards, and his son, Dr. Edwards; and in England, Mr. Daniel Taylor, Mr. Fisher, and Mr. Andrew Fuller.†

Mr. Broughton, at the close of his *Dissertation on Futurity* (shocked at the idea of *eternal* punishment in *every* case) proposes the following hypothesis: "That the spirit of God had made choice of an *ambiguous* term, *αιωνιος*, acknowledged on both sides, sometimes to be an eternal, and sometimes only a temporary duration, with the wise view, that men might live in fear of *everlasting* punishment; because, it is possible, it may be *everlasting*; and at the same time God be at liberty, (if I may so speak) without impeachment of his faithfulness and truth, to inflict either *finite* or infinite punishment, as his divine wisdom, power,

\* Such is the account of the followers of Mr. Rely, sent me by a respectable member amongst them. I have taken the liberty of applying to them the title of *Philadelphian Universalists*, merely by way of distinction. The term *Antinomian* has been bestowed upon them; but as it conveys a degree of reproach, it is here avoided.

† For most of the above account of the *Universalists*, preceding that of the *Philadelphian Universalists*, the author is indebted to a popular minister of that persuasion.

and goodness shall direct." He, however, only suggests this scheme with a becoming modesty.

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## DESTRUCTIONISTS.

BETWEEN the system of *restoration* and the system of *endless misery*, a middle hypothesis of the FINAL DESTRUCTION of the wicked (after having suffered the punishment due to their crimes) has been adopted more particularly by the Rev. Mr. Bourne, of Norwich; and Mr. John Marsom, in two small volumes, of which there has been a second edition with additions. They say that the Scripture positively asserts this doctrine of *destruction*; that the nature of future punishment (which the Scripture terms *death*) determines the meaning of the words *everlasting*, *eternal*, *for ever*, &c. as denoting endless duration; because no law ever did or can inflict the punishment of death for a limited period; that the punishment cannot be corrective, because no man was ever put to death, either to convince his judgment or to reform his conduct; that if the wicked receive a punishment *apportioned* to their crimes, their deliverance is neither to be attributed to the mercy of God, nor the mediation of Jesus Christ, but is an act of absolute justice; and finally, that the mediatorial kingdom of Jesus Christ will never be delivered.

up, since the Scripture asserts, that of his *kingdom there shall be no end*. Those who maintain these sentiments respecting the destruction of the wicked, are accused of espousing the doctrine of *annihilation*; but this accusation they repel, alledging, that philosophically speaking, there can be no annihilation, and that *destruction* is the express phrase used in the New Testament. Of this sentiment there have been many advocates distinguished for their erudition and piety.\*

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## SABBATARIANS.

THE *Sabbatarians* are a body of Christians who keep the *seventh* day as the *Sabbath*, and are to be found principally, if not wholly, among the Baptists. The common reasons why Christians observe the *first* day of the week as the Sabbath, are, that on this day Christ rose from the dead; that the apostles assembled, preached, and administered the Lord's Supper; and that it has been kept by the church for several ages, if not from the time when Christianity was originally promulgated. The Sabbatarians, however, think these reasons unsatisfactory, and assert that the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week,

\* This account of the *Destructionists* was sent the author of the Sketch for insertion.



was effected by Constantine, upon his conversion to the Christian religion. The three following propositions contain a summary of their principles as to this article of the Sabbath, by which they stand distinguished: 1st, That God hath required the observation of the seventh, or last day in every week, to be observed by mankind universally for the weekly sabbath; 2dly, That this command of God is perpetually binding on man till time shall be no more; 3dly, That this sacred rest of the seventh-day sabbath is not (by divine authority) changed from the seventh and last to the first day of the week, or that the Scripture doth no where require the observation of any other day of the week for the weekly sabbath, but the seventh day only. There are two congregations of the Sabbatarians in London, one among the General Baptists meeting in Mill-yard, Goodman's Fields, the other among the Particular Baptists meeting in Red-Cross-street, Cripplegate. There are also a few to be found in different parts of the kingdom.

Mr. Morse informs us that there are many Sabbatarians in America. "Some (says he) in Rhode Island observe the Jewish or Saturday sabbath, from a persuasion that it was one of the ten commandments, which they plead are all in their nature moral, and were never abrogated in the New Testament. Though, on the contrary, others of them believe it originated at the time of the creation, in

the command given to Adam by the Creator himself." See Genesis, chap. ii. 3. "At New Jersey also there are three congregations of the Seventh-Day Baptists; and at Ephrata, in Pennsylvania, there is one congregation of them called Tunkers. There are likewise a few Baptists who keep the seventh day as holy time, who are the remains of the Keithean or Quaker Baptists."

This tenet has given rise to various controversies, and writers of ability have appeared on both sides of the question. Mr. Cornthwaite, a respectable minister among them, about the year 1740, published several tracts in support of it, which ought to be consulted by those who wish to obtain satisfaction on the subject. The reader should also have recourse to Dr. Chandler's two discourses on the Sabbath, Mr. Amner's Dissertation on the Weekly Festival of the Christian Church, Dr. Kennicott's Sermon and Dialogue on the Sabbath, the Rev. S. Palmer's publication on the *Nature and Obligation of the Christian Sabbath*, and Estlin's Apology for the Sabbath—all of which are worthy of attention. But whatever controversy may have been agitated on this subject, certain it is, that were there no *particular day* set apart for the purpose of devotion (for which some in the present day contend) our knowledge of human nature authorizes us to say, that virtue and religion would be either greatly debilitated or finally lost from among mankind.

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The Sabbatarians hold in common with other Christians, the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity, and though much reduced in number, deserve this distinct mention, on account of their integrity and respectability.\*

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## MORAVIANS.

THE *Moravians* are supposed to have arisen under Nicholas Lewis, Count of Zinzendorf, a German nobleman, who died 1760. They were also called *Hernhuters*, from *Hernhuth*, the name of the village where they were first settled. The followers of Count Zinzendorf are called *Moravians*, because the first converts to his system were some *Moravian* families: the society themselves however assert, that they are descended from the old Moravian and Bohemian Brethren, who existed as a distinct sect sixty years prior to the Reformation. They also style themselves *Unitas Fratrum*, or the *United Brethren*; and, in general, profess to adhere to the Augsburg confession of faith. When the first Reformers were assembled at Augsburg in Germany, the Protestant princes employed Melancthon, a divine of

\* Most of the above particulars respecting the Sabbatarians were communicated to the author by some worthy individuals of that persuasion.

learning and moderation, to draw up a confession of their faith, expressed in terms as little offensive to the Roman Catholics as a regard for truth would permit. And this creed, from the place where it was presented, is called the *Confession of Augsburg*. It is not easy to unravel the leading tenets of the Moravians. Opinions and practices have been attributed to them of an exceptionable nature, which the more sensible of them disavow. They direct their worship to Jesus Christ (addressing hymns even to the wound or *hole* in the side of the Saviour!) are much attached to instrumental as well as vocal music in their religious services; and discover a predeliction for forming themselves into classes, according to sex, age, and character. Their founder not only discovered his zeal in travelling in person over Europe, but has taken special care to send missionaries into almost every part of the known world. They revive their devotion by celebrating agapæ, or love-feasts, and the casting of lots is used amongst them to know the will of the Lord. The sole right of contracting marriage lies with the elders. In Mr. La Trobe's edition of Spangenberg's Exposition of Christian Doctrine, their principles are detailed at length. There is a large community of them at a village near Leeds, which excites the curiosity of the traveller; and they have places of worship in various parts of the kingdom. Mr. Rimius published his candid nar-

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rative of this people, and Bishop Lavington (who wrote also against the Methodists) replied, in 1755, in his *Moravians compared and detected*. Mr. Weld, in his *Travels through the United States*, gives a curious account of a *Settlement of Moravians* at Bethlehem, honourable to their virtue and piety. See also an *Essay on Fanaticism*, addressed to the People of his own persuasion, by John *Stinstra*, translated by Isaac Subremont, of Dublin, 1774. The Moravians have been distinguished for their Missionary efforts—and have succeeded better than most of the other sects who have employed themselves in such undertakings. See a History of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Indians in North America, in three parts, by George Henry Laskiel, translated from the German, by Christian Ignatius La Trobe, 1794.

Dr. Paley, in his *Evidences of Christianity*, pays the following compliment to the religious Practices of the *Moravians* and *Methodists*; he in speaking of the first Christians:—"After men became *Christians*, much of their time was spent in prayer and devotion, in religious meetings, in celebrating the eucharist, in conferences, in exhortations, in preaching, in an affectionate intercourse with one another, and correspondence with other societies. Perhaps their mode of life in its form and habit, was not very unlike that of the *Unitas Fratrum* or of modern *Methodists*." Be it, however, the

desire of *every* body of Christians not only thus to imitate the *primitive disciples* in their OUTWARD conduct, but to aspire after the liberality of *their* dispositions, the peaceableness of *their* tempers, and the purity of *their* lives!

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## SANDEMANIANS.

SANDEMANIANS,\* a modern sect that originated in Scotland about the year 1728; where it is, at this time, distinguished by the name of Glassites, after its founder, Mr. John Glass, who was a minister of the established church in that kingdom; but being charged with a design of subverting the national covenant, and sapping the foundation of all national establishments, by maintaining that *the kingdom of Christ is not of this world*, was expelled by the synod from the church of Scotland. His sentiments are fully explained in a tract published at that time, entitled “The Testimony of the King of Martyrs,” and preserved in the first volume of his works. In consequence of Mr. Glass’s expulsion his adherents formed themselves into churches, conformable, in their institution and discipline, to what they apprehend to be the plan of the first

\* The author has been favoured with this account of the Sandemanians by a gentleman of respectability, who belongs to that body of Christians.

churches recorded in the New Testament. Soon after the year 1755, Mr. Robert Sandeman, an elder in one of these churches in Scotland, published a series of Letters addressed to Mr. Hervey, occasioned by his Theron and Aspasio, in which he endeavours to show, that *his* notion of faith is contradictory to the Scripture account of it, and could only serve to lead men, professedly holding the doctrines called Calvinistic, to establish their own righteousness upon their frames, feelings, and acts of faith. In these letters Mr. Sandeman attempts to prove, that faith is neither more nor less than a simple assent to the divine testimony concerning Jesus Christ, delivered for the offences of men, and raised again for their justification, as recorded in the New Testament. He also maintains that the word faith or belief, is constantly used by the apostles to signify what is denoted by it in common discourse, viz. a persuasion of the truth of any proposition, and that there is no difference between believing any common testimony and believing the apostolic testimony, except that which results from the testimony itself, and the divine authority on which it rests. This led the way to a controversy among those who are called Calvinists, concerning the nature of justifying faith, and those who adopted Mr. Sandeman's notion of it; and they who are denominated Sandemanians, formed themselves into church order, in strict fellowship with

the churches of Scotland, but holding no kind of communion with other churches. Mr. Sandeman died in 1772, in America.

The chief opinion and practices in which this sect differs from other Christians, are their weekly administration of the Lord's Supper; their love-feasts, of which every member is not only allowed, but required to partake, and which consist of their dining together at each other's houses in the interval between the morning and afternoon service; their kiss of charity used on this occasion, at the admission of a new member, and at other times when they deem it necessary and proper; their weekly collection before the Lord's Supper, for the support of the poor and defraying other expences; mutual exhortation; abstinence from blood and things strangled; washing each other's feet, when, as a deed of mercy, it might be an expression of love; the precept concerning which, as well as other precepts, they understand literally—community of goods, so far as that every one is to consider all that he has in his possession and power liable to the calls of the poor and the church; and the unlawfulness of laying up treasures upon earth, by setting them apart for any distant, future, or uncertain use. They allow of public and private diversions so far as they are not connected with circumstances really sinful; but apprehending a lot



to be sacred, disapprove of lotteries, playing at cards, dice, &c.

They maintain a plurality of elders, pastors, or bishops, in each church, and the necessity of the presence of two elders in every act of discipline, and at the administration of the Lord's Supper.

In the choice of these elders, want of learning and engagement in trade are no sufficient objections, if qualified according to the instructions given to Timothy and Titus; but second marriages disqualify for the office; and they are ordained by prayer and fasting, imposition of hands, and giving the right hand of fellowship.

In their discipline they are strict and severe, and think themselves obliged to separate from the communion and worship of all such religious societies, as appear to them not to profess the simple truth for their only ground of hope, and who do not walk in obedience to it. We shall only add, that in every transaction they esteem unanimity to be absolutely necessary. See *Letters on Sandemanianism*, by Andrew Fuller—the conclusion of which is well deserving their attention.

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## HUTCHINSONIANS.

HUTCHINSONIANS, the followers of John Hutchinson, born in Yorkshire, 1674, and who in the early part of life served the Duke of Somerset in

the capacity of a steward. The Hebrew Scriptures, he says, comprise a perfect system of natural philosophy, theology, and religion. In opposition to Dr. Woodward's *Natural History of the Earth*, Mr. Hutchinson, in 1724, published the first part of his curious book, called *Moses Principia*. Its second part was presented to the public in 1727, which contains, as he apprehends, the principles of the Scripture philosophy, which are a plenum and the air. So high an opinion did he entertain of the Hebrew language, that he thought the Almighty must have employed it to communicate every species of knowledge, and that accordingly every species of knowledge is to be found in the Old Testament. Of his mode of philosophising, the following specimen is brought forward to the reader's attention: "The air (he supposes) exists in three conditions, fire, light, and spirit: the two latter are the finer and grosser parts of the air in motion: from the earth to the sun, the air is finer and finer till it becomes pure light near the confines of the sun, and fire in the orb of the sun, or solar focus. From the earth towards the circumference of this system, in which he includes the fixed stars, the air becomes grosser and grosser till it becomes stagnant, in which condition it is at the utmost verge of this system, from whence (in his opinion) the expression of *outer darkness, and blackness of dark-*

ness, used in the New Testament, seems to be taken."

The followers of Mr. Hutchinson are numerous, and among others the Rev. Mr. Romaine, Lord Duncan Forbes, of Culloden, and the late amiable Dr. Horne, Bishop of Norwich, who published an *Abstract* of Mr. Hutchinson's writings. See also the Preface to Bishop Horne's *Life*, second edition, by William Jones. They have never formed themselves into any distinct church or society.



## THE SHAKERS,

### THEIR HISTORY.

IN the account these people give of themselves (see the *Preface* to this new edition of the *Sketch*), they mention *the Quakers* in the time of Oliver Cromwell and the *French Prophets* of a later date, as being the first who had a *peculiar testimony* from the Lord to deliver to the Christian world. But they complain that the former degenerated, "losing that desire of love and power with which they first set out," and the latter being of short continuance, their "extraordinary communications" have long ago ceased. This *Testimony* was revived in the persons of "James Wardley, a *Taylor* by trade, and Jane his wife, who wrought at the same occupation."—And the work under them began at Bolton and Man-

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chester, in Lancashire, about the year 1747. They had belonged to the Society of *Quakers*, but receiving the spirit of the *French Prophets*, and a further degree of light and power by which they were separated from that community; they continued for several years disconnected from every denomination. During this time their *Testimony* according to what they saw by vision and revelation from God was—That the SECOND APPEARING OF CHRIST was at hand, and that the Church was rising in her *full and transcendent* glory, which would effect the *final* downfall of ANTI-CHRIST!" From the *Shaking* of their bodies in religious exercises, they were called *Shakers*, and some gave them the name of *Shaking Quakers*. This name, though used in derision, they acknowledge to be proper, because they are both the subjects and instruments of the work of God in this latter day.

"Thus the Lord promised, that he would *shake* the earth with terror. (*Lowth's translation of Isaiah* ii. 19, 21.)—That, in that day, there should be a great *shaking* in the land of Israel. (*Ezek. xxxviii.* 19, 20.)—That he would *shake* the heavens and the earth. (*Isaiah xiii.* 13. *Joel iii.* 16. *Hag.* ii. 6, 7, 21.)—That he would *shake* all nations, and that *the Desire of all nations* should come.—And according to the apostle, (*Heb. xii.* 26.) That *yet once more*, he would *shake* not the earth only, but also heaven;—signifying the removing of things that are *shaken*.

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as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be *shaken* may remain. All which, particularly alluded to the latter day, and now, in reality, began to be fulfilled; of which, the name itself was a striking evidence, and much more the nature and operations of the work.

“The effects of Christ’s first appearing, were far from fulfilling those promises in their full extent: for in reality, that heaven which was to be shaken, had not yet been built; neither was the appearing of Christ, in the form of a man, so properly the *Desire of all nations*. But as his second appearing was to be manifested in that particular object, (namely *woman*), which is eminently *the Desire of all nations*; therefore it was, that the present work of God began in shaking, both as a preparatory, and an increasing work, for the full and final manifestation of Christ. And this particular operation was a significant token, that God was about to *shake*, to the foundation, and utterly ruin all their corrupt systems, and their false notions of the work of God, and of the use and end of his creatures.”

This work went on under Wardley, till the year 1770, “when the present *Testimony of Salutation and Eternal Life* was *fully* opened according to the special gift and revelation of God through ANN LEE.” She was born about the year 1736, her father John Lee, lived in *Toad Lane, Manchester*, and was a blacksmith — with him she lived till

she embarked for America. She herself was a cutter of hatter's fur, and had five brothers and two sisters. She was married to Abraham Standley, a blacksmith, and had four children who died in their infancy. In 1758, this singular woman joined the Society under Wardley—and became a distinguished leader amongst them.

“ When, therefore, ANNE, by her perfect obedience, had attained to all that was made manifest in the leading characters of the society, and still finding in herself the seed or remains of human depravity, and a lack of the divine nature, which is eternal life abiding in the soul, she did not rest satisfied in that state, but laboured in continual watchings and fastings, and in tears and incessant cries to God, day and night, for deliverance. And under the most severe tribulation, and violent temptations, as great as she was able to resist and endure, such was, frequently, her extreme agony of soul, clinching her hands together, the blood would flow through the pores of her skin !

“ By such deep mortification and suffering, her flesh wasted away, and she became like a skeleton, wholly incapable of helping herself, and was fed and nourished like an infant, although, naturally, free from bodily infirmities, and a person of strong and sound constitution, and invincible fortitude of mind.

“ In this manner she was more or less exercised in soul and body for about the term of nine years, dur-

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ing which period, the way of God, and the nature of his work, were gradually opened from one thing to another, and the light and understanding which she received, was gradually communicated to the society, until she received that manifestation of God by which the *man of sin* was revealed, and through which she discovered the transgression of the *first woman*—the root and foundation cause of human depravity, whence all mankind were lost and separated from God; and by especial and immediate revelation, she received the Testimony of God against the whole corruption of man, in its root and every branch; which is, properly, *The Testimony against the flesh*; or *The Testimony against all sin*.

“ Her testimony was in the power of God, attended with the word of prophecy, and such energy of the Spirit, as penetrated into the secrets of the heart, and was irresistible, especially in those with whom she was united.

“ And from the light and power of God which attended her ministry, and the certain power of salvation transmitted to those who received her testimony, she was received and acknowledged as the *first Mother*, or spiritual parent in the line of the female, and the second heir in the covenant of life, according to the present display of the gospel.—Hence among Believers, she hath been distinguished by no other name or title than that of *Mother*, from

that period to the present day. To such as addressed her with the customary titles used by the world, she would reply,—‘ I am *Ann the Word* ;’ signifying that in her dwelt the *Word*.”

In 1774, ANNE LEE, with some of her followers, having been thought mad, and sorely persecuted, settled their temporal affairs in England, and set sail from Liverpool for New York. James Wardley and his wife remaining behind, were removed into an alms-house, and there died. The others, we are told, “ being without lead or protection, lost their power and fell into the common course and practice of the world !” *Anne Lee* and the brethren reached New York, after working a sort of miracle, for the ship sprung a leak on the voyage, and it is more than hinted, that were it not for their exertions at the pump, the vessel would have gone down to the bottom of the ocean!—She, however, left New York and fixed her residence up the Hudson River, eight miles from the City of Albany. In this retired spot, her followers greatly multiplied, but she was not without bitter reproaches and manifold persecutions. She and the elders, would delight in missionary journeys—being out for two or three years, and returning with wonderful accounts of their success.

“ After Mother and the Elders were released from prison, they again collected together at Water-Vliet, where they were visited by great numbers



from distant parts of the state of New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New-Hampshire, and the District of Maine, who received faith; and through the power and gifts of God, which were abundantly manifested for the destruction of sin, and the salvation of souls, many were filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and increased in their understanding of the way and work of God.

“ In the Fifth Month 1781, Mother and the Elders left Water-Vliet, and visited the distant parts, from place to place, where the gospel had been received; and in all the principal places which they visited, they were resorted to from the adjacent parts; and their ministry being every where accompanied with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, in searching out sin and purging iniquity from the soul, Believers were built up in their *most holy faith*, received an increase of that overcoming power by which they were enabled to keep out of sin, were filled with consolation and peace, and many more were added to the faith.

“ Having finished their labours among the distant Believers, they returned to Water-Vliet, where they arrived in the Eighth month 1783,—having been absent about two years and four months. On the 21st day of July, the year following, Elder *William Lee* departed this life at Water-Vliet, being forty years of age.

“ The decease of Elder *William* served as a par-

ticular means of preparing the minds of Believers for a still heavier trial, in being deprived of the visible presence and protection of Mother, the thought of which seemed almost insupportable to many. But having finished the work which was given her to do, she was taken out of their sight, in the ordinary way of all living, (at Water-Vliet) on the 8th day of the Ninth month 1784.

“ Thus in the early dawn of the American revolution, when the rights of conscience began to be established, the *morning star* of Christ's second coming, disappeared from the view of the world, to be succeeded by the increasing brightness of the *Sun of righteousness* and all the promised *glory of the latter day*.

“ And thus the full revelation of Christ, in its first degree, was completed; which was according to that remarkable prophecy of *Christopher Love*, (who was beheaded under *Cromwell*;) “ Out of thee, O England! shall a *bright star* arise, whose light and voice shall make the heavens to quake, and knock under with submission to the blessed Jesus.”

James Whitaker succeeded this Elect Lady, but dying in 1787, John Hocknell the last of the European band, took the lead, and he died 1799, in the 76th year of his age. Joseph Meacham and Lucy Wright, were next administrators of this spi-

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ritual kingdom. In the year 1780, there appears to have been a remarkable revival amongst them.

“From the beginning of the work in America, in the year 1780, until about the year 1787, there was little to be seen or heard but the out-cry of convicted souls, labouring under the power of God, —and roaring *like the sound of many waters* and *mighty thunderings* against the *Man of Sin*, and all that is of the world, *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*—shaking and trembling,—prophesying or speaking with new tongues—singing and dancing—leaping and shouting, day and night; and such various supernatural effects of the power of God, as appeared to the blind spectators of this world like the most unaccountable confusion. But such as were in the work, knew perfectly what those things meant, and felt, therein, the greatest possible order and harmony, it being to them the gift and work of God for the time then present; and which bore the strongest evidence that the world was actually come to an end, (at least to those who were the subjects of it,) and the day of judgment commenced.

“But when they had found a sufficient degree of mortification and death to the life and influence of a corrupt nature, and separation from the spirit of the world, the scene changed, and such righteousness, peace, and order followed, as had never

before been established on this earth, since man was created."

Reference also is made to a pamphlet, called *the Kentucky Revival*, with an account of the entrance and progress of the *Testimony*, and the opposition it received from false teachers. Since that time we are assured, that "THE WORK hath continued to increase both North and South of the river *Ohio*, and at present there are in this Western country, eleven brethren and eight sisters sent from the Church at Lebanon, as labourers (or missionaries) together in the work.

"Since the opening of the gospel in this western country, the minds of mankind have been greatly stirred up, both by way of opposition and enquiry; and many are struck with astonishment to see such effects produced by means which to human wisdom seem so inadequate: to see so many persons of good information, and of the most upright characters, and even eminent for their piety, renounce the honors and pleasures of the present life, with all their hopes of salvation upon their former principles, to find their relation to a people whose faith is said to be founded upon the testimony of a despised woman.

"But souls who are truly convinced of sin, and are willing to have salvation on any terms, will not stumble at God's manner of dispensing it; and many such there are at this day, who, like *the ten-*

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*der branch of the good olive, manifest, (by their fervent prayers and tears, under the pressure of an evil nature) that the summer of their redemption is nigh, even at the door. But as the fulness of redemption could not be obtained until the times appointed for the full manifestation of Christ; we shall, therefore, proceed to consider the various operations of God, from the first creation of man, in relation to this important event: and—let him that readeth understand."*

### DOCTRINES.

In the delineation of doctrines *the Shakers* are exceedingly mystical and obscure; it is much easier to pronounce negatively rather than positively concerning them. They are neither Trinitarians nor Satisfactionists. They deny also the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, as well as the eternity of future punishment. The tenets on which they most dwell are those of human depravity, and of the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost! Their leading practical tenet is the abolition of MARRIAGE, or indeed the *total separation* of the sexes. This circumstance of course attracts great attention, and they pride themselves on their superior purity. The essence of their argument is, that the *Resurrection* spoken of in the New Testament means nothing more than *conversion*; our Saviour declares that *in the Re-*

*surrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage*, therefore on *conversion* or the *resurrection* of the individual, Marriage ceases!!! To speak more plainly, the *single* must continue *single* and the *married* must separate. Every passage in the Gospel and in the Epistles is interpreted according to this strange, and I may add *unnatural* hypothesis. But these Shakers shall speak for themselves, it requires some sagacity to ascertain what they believe, and a still greater degree of patience to detail what they practise.

“The readiest way to avoid persecution, would have been to advise those who professed faith in Christ, not to live contrary to the children of this world, but to run with them to the same excess of riot and ruin; but far different is the humiliating language of the gospel.

“Except a man *deny himself*, said Jesus, *and hate even his own life*, and take up his *cross daily and follow me*, he cannot be my disciple. Take away, therefore, the precepts of Christ, and all obligations of following his example, and the *offence* of the cross immediately ceases.

“But if thou marry, said the apostle, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned: nevertheless *such shall have trouble in the flesh.*” The truth of this is so abundantly proved by experience, that it entirely excludes the propriety of any contradiction.

“ But I spare you,” says he. This agrees with what he had told them before, “ I have fed you with milk, and not with meat : for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.” “ But this I say, brethren, the time is short: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ;—and they that use this world, as not abusing it : for the fashion of this world passeth away.”

“ Observe, they that *have wives* shall be as though they had none ; and they that use *this world*, as not abusing it. Can this be said, where the silent grave has inclosed the one and left the other in desolate widowhood ? or where the souls of both inhabit eternity ? Or can it be said, where the tombstones over their bodies have sealed their separation from all the works of time ? By no means. The apostle alludes to the time for which Christ taught his disciples to pray : *Thy kingdom come ; thy will be done IN EARTH, as it is in heaven.*

“ And this time had already come to the apostle, and all the true followers of Christ, as he tells them in the same epistle, when speaking of the idolatries, and fornications, and murmurings of the Jews, for which they were destroyed ; saying, “ Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples : and they are written for our admonition, [the fol-

lowers of Christ,] upon whom the ENDS OF THE WORLD ARE COME."

"Whatever degree of indulgence was extended to some among the Gentile nations, who professed faith in Christ, because they were not able to bear *the whole truth*; yet the truth did not conceal the pointed distinction which Christ made between his own true followers, and the children of this world.

"But I would have you without carefulness," saith the apostle, "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to *the Lord*, how he may *please the Lord*: [His noblest and principal affections are there.] But he that is married careth for the things that are of *the world*, how he may *please his wife*." The *wife* is put in the place of the LORD, as the first object of his affections.

"The unmarried woman careth for the things of *the Lord*, [upon whom she places *her* affections,] that *she may be holy both in body and in spirit*: but she that is married careth for the things of *the world*, how she may *please her husband*." She places her first affections upon her *husband*, instead of the LORD.

"The same pointed distinction is made by Christ; not only when he says of his disciples, *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world*; but in answering the Sadducees, who denied, and knew not that he was the *resurrection*, he says, *The chil-*



*dren of this world marry, and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more (spiritually) for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."*

"After the apostle had pointedly shewn the Corinthians the distinction, between what belonged to the world and what was of the Lord, so careful was he lest they should stumble at the truth, that he adds, 'And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.'"

"But the apostle prescribes to them the remedy, when he says, *Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.* For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

"How many soever there were among the Gentiles, who professed faith in Christ, and did not walk in the Spirit, but after the flesh; yet it is evident that there was a certain number, properly called *the Church*, who did take up a *full cross* against all the carnal works of the flesh, after the example of Christ and the apostles.

“ And whether this number were scattered abroad, or lived in different families or connexions, and possessed all things common, after the manner of the church first planted at Jerusalem, the sacred writings do not say.

“ From what hath been said concerning the *Primitive Church*, it may evidently appear, that all who were counted believers in that day did not, strictly speaking, constitute *that Church*, which was the real spiritual body of Christ—the temple of the living God.

“ The apostles were commissioned to go and teach and baptize all nations; and as the true and abiding seal of their divine commission, they themselves were first baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. And being baptized with, and into one and the same Spirit into which Christ Jesus was baptized, they were able to follow his example, and to teach others to follow them, as they followed Christ.

“ But were all the nations baptized? Did all receive their testimony? Did all follow the same example? In no wise. It is evident throughout the writings of the apostles, that there were many unto whom the preaching of the cross was foolishness. And even many who believed, or professed to believe in Christ, walked directly contrary to his example. Of this sort *St. Paul* wrote, in his epistle to the *Philippians*.

“ After having exhorted them, *Brethren, be ye followers of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample*: he adds, *For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ*: Whose end is destruction, *whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.*

“ The same depravity of faith and manners is observable under the ministry of Jesus. Multitudes followed him because they were fed with the loaves and fishes: but when he told them about eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, and that this was the true bread which came down from heaven, many, even of his disciples, were offended, and walked no more with him.”

In their conclusion of the History of *Anti-christ*, which they have given at great length, and with many shrewd observations—they thus mention the *Baptists*—the *Socinians*, and the *Quakers*.

“ The influence of *Anti-christ*, by the united power of Protestants and Papists, went, however, so effectually to exterminate the Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, that there remains no trace of their faith and power under that name. Mosheim remarks, ‘ that since they have opened their eyes, they acknowledge that the visible church is promiscuously composed of the righteous and of the wicked, &c.’

“ Many of those persecuted people who escaped the fire and sword, and retained any measure of the true *heretical* faith and practice, retired into Poland, and lived there in peace for several years. But as soon as they began to discover their real principles, the reformed churches renewed their persecuting zeal, and ‘ they were again threatened (says Mosheim,) with a formidable prospect arising from the united efforts of *Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists*, to crush their infant sect.’ ”

“ However, having completed a translation of the bible, and published a summary of their religious doctrines in the year 1572, they obtained a name of distinction among the divided parties, and are since known in history under the name of *Socinians*: yet it was long before the rage of persecution was averted from those liberal advocates of the rights of conscience: and not till the attention of the Christian world was arrested by the more extraordinary testimony of George Fox, and his friends.”

In delineating the present state of *the Christian World*, it is remarked, “ In professing the present *true Christian religion*, so called, it is absolutely necessary to profess a belief of *Three persons in the Godhead—of two natures in Christ—Imputed righteousness—the Resurrection* of all human bodies, the same in substance—the establishment of a *visible kingdom* by the *imperial power* of Christ at

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the last day—and such fundamental doctrines as were held sacred by *SAINT AUGUSTIN, LEO THE GREAT, Doctor MARTIN LUTHER, Bishop CALVIN*, and the *true Catholic church* in every age.

“ These same doctrines that smothered every principle of reason, and inflamed the passions of mankind to fill the earth with bloodshed and cruelty, are considered as the only sound Christian principles of the present day, as may be seen in all their modern creeds: and no more altered are their present means of christianizing, or their principles of church government.\*

“ After all, it is a fact that the most polished of those *reformers* and *conformers* never granted nor promoted the religious liberty of the present day; this change was effected, by the order of Divine Providence, in the hearts of the civil rulers of the earth.

“ When *GEORGE WASHINGTON*, that justly respected patriot, stood forth at the head of a great nation in the cause of liberty, and Christians on both sides of the Atlantic, implored each their God

\* Although, in consequence of the progress of civilization, and the prevalence of civil liberty, there is an abatement of ecclesiastical tyranny and rigorous compulsion; yet human power and human authority are the means used, instead of the authority and power of God; and the subjects are required to subscribe human creeds, and observe human ceremonies, as the conditions of salvation.

to go forth with their respective armies, it was not in answer to the prayers of these divided hypocrites that the contest was decided; but when the European God was obliged to give up his despotic reins, then, indeed, the European creeds must be new modelled by American ecclesiastics, to suit the government of the most powerful deity.

“Neither was it in a general council of *Christian bishops*, but of noble advocates for civil and religious liberty, that the wise and generous WASHINGTON, established the rights of conscience by a just and equitable Constitution. And truly, if the rights of conscience are still respected under the present administration, we are not indebted to ecclesiastical tyrants for the privilege; for such never will respect nor promote an establishment which has a tendency to diminish the current of their unrighteous gain, by allowing every one to think and act for themselves in matters of religion.”

The system of the *Shakers* is thus pretty plainly described, “In the fullness of time, according to the unchangeable purpose of God, that same Spirit and word of power, which created man at the beginning—which spake by all the prophets—which dwelt in the man Jesus—which was given to the apostles and true witnesses as the holy Spirit and Word of promise, which groaned in them waiting for the day of redemption—and which was spoken of in the language of prophecy as a woman tra-

vailing with child, and pained to be delivered, was revealed in a *WOMAN*.

“ And that *woman*, in whom was manifested that Spirit and Word of power, who was anointed and chosen of God, to reveal the mystery of iniquity, to stand as the first in her order, to accomplish the purpose of God, in the restoration of that which was lost by the transgression of the first woman, and to finish the work of man’s final redemption, was *ANN LEE*.

“ As a chosen vessel, appointed by divine Wisdom, she, by her faithful obedience to that same anointing, became the temple of the Holy Ghost, and the second heir with Jesus, her Lord and head, in the covenant and promise of eternal life. And by her sufferings and travail for a lost world, and her union and subjection to Christ Jesus, her Lord and head, she became the *first born of many sisters*, and the true *MOTHER of all living* in the new creation.

“ Thus the perfection of the revelation of God in this latter day, excels, particularly, in that which respects the most glorious part in the creation of man, namely, the woman. And herein is the most condescending goodness and mercy of God displayed, not only in redeeming that most amiable part of the creation from the curse, and all the sorrows of the fall, but also in condescending to the lowest estate of the loss of mankind.

“ So that by the first and second appearing of Christ, the foundation of God is laid and completed, for the full restoration of both the man and the woman in Christ, according to the order of the new covenant, which God hath established in them for his own glory, and the mutual good and happiness of each other.

“ And in this covenant, both male and female, as brethren and sisters in the family of Christ, jointly united by the bond of love, find each their correspondent relation to the first cause of their existence, through the joint parentage of their redemption.

“ Then the man who was called JESUS, and the woman who was called ANN, are verily the two first foundation pillars of the Church of Christ—the two anointed ones—the two first *heirs* of promise, between whom the covenant of eternal life is established—the first *Father* and *Mother* of all the children of regeneration—the two first visible parents in the work of redemption—and the invisible joint parentage in the new creation, for the increase of that seed through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Nor are the *Shakers* without their miracles—several instances of supernatural cases are mentioned—here are the *first* and *last*—they are curious specimens—take them with the introductory remarks.

“ As these gifts originally flow from the Spirit,



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and belong to the Church they are of importance in their proper place, and have been abundantly used in the first opening of the gospel in America. Therefore, it may not be improper to notice here a few instances of that miraculous power, by which the most stubborn unbelievers were confounded, and the faith of others strengthened, who continue to be living witnesses of the truth to the present day.

“ It has been remarked that Pharaoh’s wise men and sorcerers could mimic the miracles of Moses, in such things as were productive of evil ; but those evils they could not remove, which showed that the evil spirit had neither power nor disposition to do good. Hence such miracles as were of benefit to mankind have been most generally considered as a distinguishing confirmation of the spirit of goodness and truth ; and upon this principle the gift of healing has been the most universally ascribed to the spirit of Christ.

“ Therefore, although a multitude of facts of a like extraordinary appearance might have been collected from the living witnesses of the present work of God, yet, to the candid and honest friend of truth, the following particulars may be sufficient to show that the same spirit which wrought by Christ Jesus and his apostles was made manifest for the confirmation of the truth in this latter day.

“ NOAH WHEATEN, of New Lebanon, in the state of New York, aged sixty-four years, testifies,

that shortly after he had received faith in the testimony of Christ's second appearing, in the year 1780, near the beginning of July, (according to the best of his remembrance,) being employed in clearing land, about forty or fifty rods from his own house, and being thirsty, he left his work to go to a spring on the opposite side of a fence near by to get some drink.— That having mounted the fence, which was very high, in jumping off, by a mis-step, dislocated his ankle outwardly and split or broke the outer bone of his leg, just above the ankle joint.

“ That after groaning and wallowing in this situation a while he crawled to the spring and back to the place where he had been at work. That although he was unable to go on with his work he was yet unwilling to return to his house or to make his case known, on account of the enmity of his unbelieving neighbours, to whom he had often testified his faith, as he had nothing to expect from them but derision.

“ That his ankle began to swell and the pain increased, yet there he continued, tumbling and rolling about, for the space of two or three hours, in great distress of mind as well as pain of body. That at length he crawled home on his hands and knees, and although under extreme mortification of spirit for this misfortune yet he was full of faith and confidence in the gift of miracles, which he had before strongly testified to his unbelieving neighbours.

“ That he felt the trial of his faith now come, and was, therefore, resolved not to mar his testimony by flinching from it in the hour of trial ; but feeling full confidence in the gift of God he refused to have a doctor called, or any attempt made to set the bone, or even any outward application, for the mitigation of his pain.—That, consequently, his ancle and leg swelled greatly, turned black, and was excessively painful.

“ That, while in this situation, numbers of his unbelieving neighbours came to see him, and also several of the believers ; but still confident in the faith of a miraculous cure, and desiring to confirm his testimony to his neighbours, he would not submit to the ordinary means of relief. That thus he continued, from about two o'clock in the afternoon, till the evening of the following day ; during which time, his mind was in agonizing labour to God for a miraculous cure ; which, with his extreme pain, forced the sweat in plentiful effusions, from every pore of his body.

“ At length, as his family, consisting of ten in number, were assembled at their evening worship, in the room where he was then sitting upon a chest, the power of God came suddenly upon him, and he was instantly hurled from his seat, and set upon his feet, and whirled swiftly round, like a top, for the space of two hours, without the least pain or inconvenience ! That he then retired to rest, well

and comfortable—and the next morning, arose in health, took his team and went to plowing.

“The said *Noah Wheaten* further testifies, as a remarkable fact, that his unbelieving neighbours, who were knowing of his miraculous cure, came to his house, and desired to see his ancle.—That, accordingly, he uncovered it before them; at this instant, a sharp pain, like the piercing of a dagger, passed through his ancle—and that this was repeated as often as he showed it, for several days afterwards. That otherwise he has suffered no inconvenience from it, from that time to this; but that ancle has remained as sound as the other.

“That happening afterwards to mention this circumstance to Mother, she said, *It was their unbelief which pierced his ancle, and that he had no business to shew it to them.*

“Taken from the mouth of the said *Noah Wheaten*, the 21st of April, 1808. In presence of *Richard Spier, Stephen Munson, Daniel Goodrich, and Seth Y. Wells.*

(Signed) NOAH WHEATEN.”

“MARY TURNER, of *New-Lebanon*, testifies, That her son *Jonathan*, (since deceased,) being about nine or ten years of age, was chopping wood, at some distance from home, and by a stroke of the ax, received a very bad wound on the top of his foot: [his father, *Gideon Turner*, testifies that he

could lay his finger at length in the wound.] That he was brought home, and she seeing it bleed excessively, was greatly troubled, not knowing what to do for it.

“ That she went into another room, kneeled down and cried to God, and soon felt the power of God run down her arm, and into her right hand— instantly her hand seemed to be filled with the power of God, accompanied with such a delicious balsamic smell, as she was unable to describe.—That feeling confident that it was a gift of healing for her son, she returned directly into the room and put her hand on the wound, and it instantly ceased bleeding. She then walked the floor—came again and laid on her hand a second time; this she repeated seven times, gently stroking the wound, during which time, it closed up and was healed, leaving only a small seam.

“ That she then bound it up. This being Saturday afternoon, the next morning she unbound it, and found no other appearance of the wound than a small white seam, resembling a white thread;— after which he attended meeting, went forth in the worship of God, was fully restored, and found no inconvenience from the wound afterwards.

“ *Gideon* further testifies, that while *Mary* (the child's mother) was stroking the wound, he saw the flesh gradually gather and close up, leaving only a small red streak, about the size of a knit-

ting needle; and that he was restored as above described.

“ Taken from the mouth of the said *Mary* and *Gideon*, April 25th, 1808. In the presence of *Daniel Goodrich*, *Seth Y. Wells* and others.

(Signed) { *MARY TURNER,*  
                  { *GIDEON TURNER.*”

Upon *the Person of Christ*, it is remarked,  
“ Moses had written the history of the natural creation from the beginning, and not the history of the new creation; but the Evangelists wrote the history of the new creation, and not that of the old, having been eye witnesses of the work of Christ Jesus from the beginning, and having received the *WORD*, by which the foundation of that world was laid, and by which they were created anew in Christ Jesus, who was the beginning of that creation.

“ In the beginning was the Word, [of Revelation] and the word was God: The same [Word] was in the beginning with God. Every thing was by him, and without him was not any thing that was. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.—And the Word was flesh [revealed by Christ Jesus] and dwelt among [or in] us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

“ That *Word* by which Jesus spake, by which the ages were set in order, and which Jesus testified

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should judge the world at the last day, proceeded from the everlasting substance of the Father, and the Holy Ghost; and hence the *Father*, the *Word*, and the *Holy Ghost are one*, in essence, in nature, and in union, everlasting.

“ But doth this imply ‘ *Three Persons*, of one Substance, Power, and Eternity?’ or that ‘ The Son is eternally begotten of the Father?’ Or doth it imply that the Son is ‘ very and eternal God, equal with the Father?’ No such thing. *I can of mine own self do nothing*, said Jesus: *The Word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me:—For my father is greater than I.*”

Of the *Satisfaction* of Christ as it is called, the Shakers speak in the following manner:—“ It would seem that the sufferings and death of God, in the room and stead of sinful flesh, was a doctrine reserved for those latter times of departing, or standing off from the faith, and bringing in damnable heresies, even denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

“ If ‘ God the Mighty Maker died for man the creature’s sin;’ or if ‘ God himself comes down to be the offering—’ and is a sacrifice or sin offering, well might the beast and the false prophet rejoice at his death: for it must be the living that have the dominion; and the living must be superior to the dead.

“ According to the true proverb, “ A living dog

is better than a dead lion.' And upon the same principle, a living man is better than a dying, or dead God. For that which is dead can never raise itself to life; and if the dead are raised, it must be by the power of the living. Therefore, if sinners were real enemies to God, and he actually died in their stead, that they might live in sin, and in their blood, during life, and be saved from punishment hereafter, it certainly depended on the living whether the dead should ever rise.

“Wo to him that is alone, for if he fall, who shall help him up? Hence the necessity of another link in this chain of darkness, “Behold *a God* descends and dies.’ That is, one of the God dies, to satisfy the justice and appease the wrath of the other, in behalf of sinners; and the other, as soon as he was satisfied, raised up the dead one: and the dead one, after he was raised up, stood day and night, perpetually showing his wounds, and pleading before his Father, that he suffered and died in the room and stead of sinners, as a satisfaction to his justice.

“But what God or what justice could take satisfaction in beholding the marks of cruelty in the innocent, while the guilty went unpunished? Such black and infernal darkness, is too disgusting to the reason of man, and too distressing to any enlightened soul, to merit a serious investigation; but must



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be sent back, with the beast and false prophet, to the bottomless pit from whence it arose."

In their chapter on the *Resurrection*, the resuscitation of the body is denied very positively and at great length, and their chapter on Public worship vindicates their *music* and *dancing* as leading parts of worship, especially alluding to the return of the *prodigal*, while the *elder son* disliking *music* and *dancing* represents the *natural man* condemning their soul-reviving practices.

Thus have I given appropriate passages of illustration respecting the HISTORY and DOCTRINES of the *Shakers*, nor has the selection been made without considerable difficulty. In upwards of *six hundred* pages a great variety of passages would offer themselves, and the task was to transcribe those best suited to elucidate my subject with brevity. But as I am not sure that the reader has even now a clear idea of these most eccentric Christians, who are *numerous* and *daily* increasing in America, I am tempted to subjoin their *Conclusion* in prose and part of the poetry, where reference is made to most of their tenets and the objections raised against them curiously answered.

## THE CONCLUSION,

*Addressed to Young Believers.*

“To all who have received the faith of the Son of God, in the present opening of the everlasting gospel, and in obedience thereunto, have confessed and forsaken their sins, and have separated themselves from the common course and practice of this present evil world, with a full determination to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth:

“Brethren and Sisters, dearly beloved for the truth’s sake, before we close this account, we think it expedient, in a few words, to address you in particular; sensible of the important relation which we bear towards you, as well as of the greatness of the work into which you are called, and the effect which it must finally have upon all souls.

“According to the gift of God committed to us, and the present state of mankind to receive the truth, we have opened the most essential matters of fact, that have taken place in different ages of the world, from the beginning, in relation to the salvation and redemption of souls. And as the way of God is in the great deep, *whom no man hath seen nor can see*, it is expected that many things, in relation to his work, will appear dark and mysterious to all flesh.

“However, it has been our aim to state things agreeable to truth, and according to that measure

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of light and understanding which we have received from God, without any design of pleasing man: we have therefore used great plainness of speech, both in exposing the lost state of man, in all ages, as sunk in the corruptions and lusts of a carnal nature, and in opening the strait and narrow way of self-denial, for both man and woman, according to Christ's first and second appearing.

“ We are fully apprised of the infinite flood of objections, which naturally arise in human nature, against those piercing and very mortifying truths, although we have not thought proper to investigate or answer those objections so fully as some may wish; nor do we suppose that they ever will be fully answered by paper and ink, or any thing short of that convincing *arrow*, the light and power of God, by which *they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves*.

“ Whatever reasonings the human imagination may invent, they are no more than empty bubbles, when compared to the power of God, which is made known by real facts, according to the times and seasons of his work. Therefore it is not for us to indulge a spirit of vain reasoning, but to believe what God hath wrought, and by obedience, to reap the everlasting benefit.

“ As the facts which we have stated are plain and simple, it requires nothing more than for the mind to be divested of prejudice and a false education to

believe them; and in truth, it is impossible for any soul that is simply honest and bent after the truth and hears it, to believe any thing else.

“ We have plainly testified the well known and undeniable fact, that man, in his natural state, is fallen from God into the nature of the wicked one; that all mankind remained in that fallen state, until Christ the Saviour appeared; that he took that nature and crucified it, as an example to all souls; and that as many as took up the same cross, and followed him in that day, were a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.

“ We have also testified that there was a falling away, that Anti-christ reigned, and that no true church, nor the perfect way of God, was known on the earth, for many ages; but that according to the testimony of all the true witnesses, it was to be opened in the latter day. Accordingly, we have plainly stated how, and where, and when, the perfect way of God was opened the second time; and what those souls have actually obtained who have come into it.

“ These things, dearly beloved, are not cunningly devised fables, nor matters of mere speculation, as you yourselves also know; but they are the most important facts that ever were exhibited on earth. And we can confidently say, that as universally as Jew and Gentile were convinced of sin, so universally they all expected a Saviour; and as ex-

tensive as their expectations were, so extensive hath the news circulated through the earth, that Jesus was the person ordained of God to that office.

“ And again, as extensively as the name of Christ Jesus hath spread through the earth, and souls have been awakened to a deeper sense of their loss, so universally hath the second appearing of Christ been expected; and to the same extent shall it be known, that through *the blessed Mother* of our redemption, the glory and perfection of his divine nature hath been revealed for salvation, unto the ends of the earth, in these latter days.

“ It would doubtless have been very gratifying to the idolatrous kingdom of Anti-christ, had the biography of Jesus of Nazareth been as fully and clearly stated as that of General Washington, or some of the great and noble ones of the earth.

“ Could they have ascertained the precise time of his birth; the name of the inn-keeper in whose stable he was born; how many shepherds, and what their names were, who found him and his mother; to what size he grew, and what was his shape and colour; such frivolous circumstances would have feasted their refined taste, while the main subject of his mission was wholly disregarded.

“ But whatever curious minds were in search after, certain it is, the true believer gloried only in his having found the Messiah; and it was immaterial to such how he came, seeing this was he, of

whom Moses and the prophets did write. So in regard to his SECOND appearing, a thousand curious enquiries may be raised, relating to temporal circumstances, which are mere bubbles of vanity to souls who are groaning under the bondage of sin, and earnestly longing for redemption.

“The first in America who received the testimony of the Gospel, were satisfied that it was the truth of God against all sin, and that in faithful obedience thereunto, they should find that salvation and deliverance from the power of sin, for which they sincerely panted. And being made partakers of the glorious liberty of the sons of God, it was a matter of no importance with them from whence the means of their deliverance came, whether from a *Stable* in Bethlehem, or from *Toad-lane* in Manchester.

“Nor could any circumstance, demeaning to the pride of man, be construed in any other light, than as an evidence that God had chosen things that are *despised*, to bring to nought things that are *highly esteemed* among men, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

“It was sufficient that the testimony of God had reached them, and that the requirement of God was plainly made known, and all they had to do was to improve their privilege, and be thankful that they were counted worthy to receive the word of God, through whatever medium he was pleased to bestow it.



“ This they have done by a patient continuance in well-doing, amidst false and slanderous reports, amidst scoffings, railings, buffetings, stripes, and imprisonments. And thus, by the overcoming spirit and power of the gospel, they have transmitted unto you the testimony of Christ, pure and undefiled.

“ And by no higher argument will you ever be able to vindicate the past, or recommend the present work of God, than by the innocence of your lives and the purity of your morals; while, by the present gift and power of God, your only guardian, you grow up into the divine nature, resisting and overcoming fleshly lusts which war against the soul; having your conversation honest; that whereas they speak evil against you as evil doers, they may, by your good works which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. For so is the will of God, that with *well-doing*, ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

“ The false spirit of Anti-christ may yet continue, for a season, to slander and misrepresent all you do and say. A time-serving priesthood, who neither know what they say, nor whereof they affirm, may palm upon you the character of deceivers, wolves in sheep's cloathing, and gather up and circulate every lying report against you. Or seeing the hope of their gain cut off, they may, through envy, stir up *lewd fellows of the baser sort*, to abuse your persons or property, as they often have done.



*“ But if they have persecuted me, (said Jesus,) they will also persecute you. And if they have called the master of the house Belzebub, how much more they of his household. ¶ The true followers of Christ never persecuted any: Therefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

“ But whatever subtle argument, or false accusation may be brought against the faith or practice of the followers of Christ in this day, no supposable or imaginary future event can be any rule for our present conduct; but the certain will of God we are to do, as revealed to us, and to submit the event to the disposer of all things: knowing of a certainty, that those who are without, as well as those who are within, must sooner or later, pass through the same equitable judgment.

“ Therefore we are in no wise bound to answer the inconsistent query, ‘ What would become of the world, if all the human race were to live as we do?’ With as much propriety we might ask, what would have become of beasts and men, if Noah had disobeyed God, and lived like the rest of the world? Or what would have become of Jesus and the millions who have been taught to follow his example, if Joseph and Mary, through disobedience, had refused to fly from the persecuting cruelty of Herod?

“ A thousand such questions might be asked; but it is not a question of so much concern to the people of God, what will become of the world, as it is to



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know their Lord's will, and to do it, and thereby to *flee from the wrath to come.*

“Thousands and Millions may be butchered, nation be destroyed by nation, and the earth be involved in blood and calamity, and nothing said about the danger or wickedness of such an example, nor any concern expressed about the world's coming to an end! But no sooner do souls confess and forsake their sins, and set out to follow the example of Christ Jesus, but the hue and cry is raised. *The world will come to an end!* As if man was a mere lump of flesh and blood, created for no higher end than to live after the flesh, in the gratification of their lusts, and to destroy one another.

“Still more inconsistent, is the query of the vain anti-christian, ‘If all were to cease from the works of the flesh, how would the church be supplied, or what would God do for preachers and saints to worship and praise him?’ For it is abundantly manifest, that they who *live after the flesh cannot please God*, and that it was expressly for the purpose of raising up a people to serve God, that Christ came and set the example of crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts. In answer to this spirit of cavilling in the Jews, it was testified, that *God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.*

“Therefore the true ministers of Christ and worshippers of God, being born of the Spirit, are *not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh*, in any

of its gratifications; but are those who live the life of heaven by the power of the Holy Ghost which is in them, and the resurrection from the dead; being redeemed from men, even from the corrupt nature of man, and are not defiled with women, *for they are virgins*, without fault before the throne of God.

“ The last blind argument to foster and soothe the flesh is the doctrine of a final resurrection of all those human bodies that have mingled with the common elements of the globe, through all ages, since the first man. But if there were no other argument to confute such an absurd doctrine its own inconsistency might be fully sufficient to render it contemptible in the eyes of every wise man.

“ From such unreasonable, unscriptural, and senseless superstition, God hath in mercy delivered you: whereas it was but a few years ago, that the altar of superstition was reeking with the blood of the innocent and virtuous, who dared to hope for that *better resurrection*, of which you are the living witnesses.

“ What Millions, from sequestered vallies and desolate mountains, from lonely cottages, and silent groves, from torture-rooms, and racks, and devouring flames, have looked, and wept, and prayed, towards this latter day of liberty and peace! How have they talked of the rights of man, and laboured to describe in words what your eyes behold, and

your souls daily enjoy, namely, the blessings of peace and salvation, in a land sacred to freedom!

“ Then how unspeakably great is your privilege, seeing the eyes of all who have ever suffered in the cause of virtue, have earnestly looked towards the privileges you enjoy, and have justly expected, with you, to receive the crown of eternal glory, and, with you, to drink of the river of the water of life.

“ And from whence have flowed those blessings, both civil and sacred, which you enjoy, but from ALMIGHTY GOD, the wise disposer of all events; by whose providence you are placed, not only under the *American Eagle*, the brightest ensign of civil and religious liberty ever raised on the earth since the fall of man, but under the sunshine of the Everlasting gospel, the only object of real and abiding happiness.

“ Therefore, while you, with others, enjoy your just and natural rights, those wholesome laws of freedom will ever be respected by every true Believer: and much more that sacred and eternal law of the spirit of life, in Christ's second appearing, by which you are freed from the dominion of sin, and made partakers of that knowledge and virtue, which will eventually become the desire of all the nations of the earth.

“ Unshackled by superstition, unbiassed by the terrors of tyranny, and redeemed from false systems, and the reigning power of iniquity, by which your

souls were held in bondage, you stand free to judge between truth and error, light and darkness, good and evil, and to chuse *that* which you, as a free and chosen people, deliberately judge to be productive of the greatest present and eternal good.

“ And being *the seed of the Woman*, chosen of God to bruise the serpent's head, to keep the commandments of God, and maintain the testimony of Jesus, it is your inestimable privilege to follow the example of those through whom ye are begotten into the enduring substance of eternal life. And being called and chosen, be ye faithful to prove that you are not bastards, but sons and daughters, just and rightful heirs to the profound inheritance, through whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed, in turning every one from his iniquity.

“ Finally, Brethren and Sisters, farewell ; be wise, be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind ; keep the gift of God, and the gift of God will keep you ; live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you, and establish you unshaken, and immoveable, in his *kingdom of righteousness and Eternal Truth*.”

## A POEM,

*Containing a short Abridgement of the foregoing Testimony.*

We subjoin only the last half of it.

**BEFORE** John's mission had begun,  
The Holy Ghost conceiv'd a Son;  
And when he grew to proper age,  
He show'd his heav'nly parentage,  
Renounc'd the flesh in branch and  
root,  
Condemn'd the tree and all its fruit;  
And through his sufferings did create  
The substance of a better state!

Four hundred years the tidings  
spread,  
That Christ was risen from the dead;  
And such as kept his new command,  
Arose in one united band.  
Though persecuted and revil'd,  
They kept their doctrine undeil'd,  
Till wicked priests the pow'r did gain,  
And Anti-christ began his reign!

The monstrous beast, and bloody  
whore  
Reign'd thirteen hundred years and  
more;  
And under foot the truth was trod,  
By their mysterious three-fold God:  
But while they plac'd in the *He*  
Their sacred co-eternal *Threes*,  
A righteous persecuted few  
Ador'd the everlasting *Two*!

The Holy Ghost at length did bear  
Th' anointed one, the second heir,  
A virgin soul, a holy child,  
A *Mother* pure and undefil'd;  
In her the heirship is complete,  
In her the types and figures meet,  
And God's last building stands upon  
The sacred truth of *two in one*!

The law and prophets all unite  
To seal this true eternal light:  
Two tables did the law complete,  
Two cherubs on the mercy-seat,  
Two silver trumpets plainly shew  
That gospel truth proceeds from  
*two*;  
And though the priest one goat did  
slay,  
The second bore the sins away!

The order of eternal rest,  
Next by the temple was express'd:  
This building was laid off in two,  
The one conceal'd from public  
view:  
Thus in the female and the male,  
The flesh was still the parting veil;  
But when this veil is rent and gone,  
The building is complete in one!

The prophets saw in visions clear,  
By whom redemption would appear,  
That "two anointed ones" would  
stand  
Before the God of all the land.  
Two olive trees supply'd the bowl,  
As life from Christ supplies the soul;  
And certain as the vision's true,  
The *Male* and *Female* are the two!

Ezekiel saw a river wide,  
With many trees on either side:  
The tree of life appear'd to John,  
And truly there were more than  
one;  
On either side the trees were seen,  
While living waters flow between:  
This tree of life on either side,  
He calls the Spirit and the Bride!

We surely know by what we feel,  
Their leaves will yet the nations heal:  
Ye lame & blind, ye deaf & dumb,  
"The Spirit and the Bride say,  
Come,"  
Let him that heareth swell the  
sound,  
And let it go the nations round,  
That all who will their sins forsake,  
May everlasting life partake!

Since Christ has in his glory come,  
We've found our everlasting home;  
Our parentage in all its height,  
Is by the gospel brought to light.  
Th' eternal truth is on our side,  
The quick'ning Spirit and the Bride,  
With all the bright and heav'nly  
host,  
The FATHER & the HOLY GHOST!

Many reflections no doubt will crowd into the Reader's mind. In this mass of sublimated fanaticism, which constitutes the volume it was however pleasing to observe that there appeared to be in these *Shakers* such a love of *good works* and such a strain of fervent but misguided piety. It is an unfortunate circumstance, that the *Sect* should take up its abode in the *United States* of America—a large Outline which wants filling up, and where therefore *Population* is one of its greatest blessings.

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## DUNKERS.

*Conrad Peysel*, a German Baptist, was the founder of the *Dunkers* about 1724, who, weary of the world, retired to an agreeable solitude within fifty miles of Philadelphia, that he might give himself up to contemplation. Curiosity brought several of his countrymen to visit his retreat and by degrees his pious, simple and peaceable manners induced others to settle near him. They formed a little colony of German Baptists, which they call *Euphrata* or *Euphrates*, in allusion to the Hebrews, who used to sing psalms on the border of that river. This little city forms a triangle, the outsides of which are bordered with mulberry and apple trees planted with great regularity. In the middle is a very large

orchard, and between the orchard and these ranges of trees are houses built of wood three stories high, where every Dunker is left to enjoy the pleasures of his meditations without disturbance. Their number in 1777 did not exceed 500, but since that period they have increased. They do not foolishly renounce marriage, but when married they detach themselves from the rest and retire into another part of the country. The Dunkers lament the fall of Adam, but deny the imputation of his sin to posterity. They use *trine* immersion (dipping three times) in baptism, and use laying on of hands when the baptized are received into the church. They dress like Dominican friars, shaving neither head nor beard; have different apartments for the sexes, and live chiefly on roots and vegetables, except at their love feast, when they eat mutton. It is said no bed is allowed them but in case of sickness, having in their separate cells a bench to lie upon and a block of wood for their pillow! They deny the eternity of future punishment, believe that the dead have the gospel preached to them by our Saviour, and that the souls of the just are employed to preach the gospel to those who have had no revelation in this life.

But their chief tenet is, that *future happiness* is only to be obtained by penance and outward mortification, so as that Jesus Christ by his meritorious sufferings became the Redeemer of mankind in general, so each individual of the human race by a life of

abstinence and restraint may *work out his own salvation*. Nay, it is said they admit of works of super-errogation. They use the same form of government and the same discipline as the English Baptists do, except that every person is allowed to speak in the congregation, and their best speaker is usually ordained to be minister. They have also deacons and deaconesses from among their ancient widows, who may all use their gifts and exhort at stated times.

Thus far Mr. Adams in his *Religious World Displayed*: and hence he remarks, that the system of the *Dunkers* seems to be a medley made up of the tenets of the Baptists, Universalists, Calvinists, Lutherans, Jews, Methodists and Roman Catholics! Certain however it is, notwithstanding so strange a mixture, they are distinguished for great benevolence and a fervent piety. Mr. Winchester, in his *Dialogues on Restoration*, draws a high character of them. His friend, the Rev. Morgan Edwards, formerly minister of the Baptist church in Philadelphia, once said to him respecting the *Dunkers*, and he knew them well, "God always will have a visible people on earth, and *these* are his people at present above any other in the world!" And in his *History of the Pennsylvania Baptists*, Mr. M. says of them "General redemption they certainly hold, and withal General salvation, which tenets (though wrong) are *consistent*." On account of their meek-



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ness and hatred of war and slavery, together with a renunciation of all sorts of violence, they are denominated the *harmless* Dunkers; pity it is, that this epithet cannot be applied to *all* the professors of Christianity.

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## NEW AMERICAN SECT.

THE *American* editor of this work has added the following article:

“ Many of those who lately migrated from WALES to America have adopted the following articles as their religious constitution :

“ 1. The convention shall be called the *Christian Church*.

“ 2. It shall never be called by any other name, or be distinguished by the particular tenets of any man or sect of men.

“ 3. Jesus Christ is the *only* head—believers in him the *only* members—and the New Testament the *only* rule of the fraternity.

“ 4. In mental matters, each member shall enjoy his own sentiments, and freely discuss every subject: but in discipline, a strict conformity with the precepts of Christ is required.

“ 5. Every distinct society belonging to this association, shall have the same power of admitting its

members, electing its officers, and in case of malconduct, of impeaching them.

“ 6. Delegates from the different congregations shall meet from time to time, at an appointed place, to consult the welfare and advancement of the general interest.

“ 7. At every meeting for religious worship, collections shall be made for the poor, and the promulgation of the gospel *among the Heathens*.”

This plan, which has many traits to recommend it, originated chiefly with the late Rev. *M. J. Rees*, who a few years ago emigrated from Wales, and distinguished himself in America by his talents and activity. He died in the prime of life, December 1804, at Somerset, in Pennsylvania, deeply regretted by his numerous friends and connections.

As to the other sects in the United States, they are much the same as on this side of the Atlantic. For an account of them, the reader may consult *Morse's American Geography*, and *Winterbotham's History of America*.

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## MYSTICS.

THE *Mystics* are those who profess a pure and sublime devotion, with a disinterested love of God, free from all selfish considerations. Passive contemplation is a state of perfection to which they

aspire. Of this description there have been many singular characters, especially Madame Guyon, a French lady, who made a great noise in the religious world. Fenelon, the amiable Archbishop of Cambray, favoured the sentiments of this female devotee, for which he was reprimanded by the Pope, and to whose animadversions he *most dutifully* assented, contrary to the convictions of his own mind. It is not uncommon for the Mystics to allegorise certain passages of scripture, at the same time not denying the literal sense, as having an allusion to the inward experience of believers. Thus, according to them, the word *Jerusalem*, which is the name of the capital of Judea, signifies allegorically the church militant; morally, a believer; and mysteriously, heaven. That fine passage also in Genesis, "Let there be light, and there was light," which is, according to the letter, corporeal light, signifies allegorically, beatitude, or the light of glory. *Mysticism* is not confined to any particular profession of Christianity, but is to be understood as generally applied to those who dwell upon the *inward operations* of the mind (such as the *Quakers*, &c.) laying little or no stress on the outward ceremonies of religion.\*

\* The two following Sects are occasionally mentioned in conversation, and the Author has been asked by young people more than once for an explanation of them. A short account therefore is subjoined.

## SWEDENBORGIANS.

THE *Swedenborgians* are the followers of Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish nobleman, who died in London, 1772. He professed himself to be the founder (under the Lord) of the *New Jerusalem Church*, alluding to the New Jerusalem spoken of in the Book of the Revelation of St. John. His

The *FIFTH MONARCHY MEN* were a set of enthusiasts in the time of Cromwell, who expected the sudden appearance of Christ to establish on earth a new *monarchy*, or kingdom. In consequence of this allusion some of them aimed at the subversion of all human government. In ancient history we read of four great monarchies, the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman: and these men believing that this new spiritual kingdom of Christ was to be the *fifth*, came to bear the name by which they are distinguished. See Burnet's History of his Own Times, where the reader will find a particular account of them.

The *Muggletonians* (a very few of whom remain) were the followers of Ludovick Muggleton, a journeyman taylor, who with his companion, Reeves, (a person of equal obscurity) set up for *Prophets*, in the turbulent times of Cromwell. They pretended to absolve or condemn whom they pleased, and gave out that they were the *two last witnesses* spoken of in the Revelations who were to appear previous to the final destruction of the world. I picked up a thin quarto volume published by Muggleton; it detailed his sufferings and persecutions, and stated at large his travels and labours. But from the wildness and incoherency of his statements, (some of which are really ludicrous) there

tenets, although peculiarly distinct from every other system of divinity in Christendom, are nevertheless drawn from the Holy Scriptures, and supported by quotations from them. He asserts, that in the year 1743, the Lord manifested himself to him in a personal appearance; and at the same

can be no doubt of the poor man's insanity. I have only to add in the present edition—that the followers of Muggleton were strong opposers of the common notion of the Trinity, and seem to have entertained proper ideas of the injustice, impolicy, and odiousness of persecution: This appears from a work put into my hands recently—entitled *The Muggletonian Principles prevailing*, published in 1695. It is a reply to an adversary. “When God gathers up his jewels, many of those that have been judged *Heretics*, will rise *Saints*, and many of those that your Churches have canonized for *Saints* will rise *Devils*! For no *Persecutors of Conscience* will escape the stroke. If any man object *Paul's* persecuting the Church, they may know that *Paul* at that time acknowledged no *Jesus* at all; therefore when both sides acknowledge a *Jesus*, take heed how you persecute!”

Since writing the above paragraph, I have met with the following Inscription—taken from the Church-Yard, Spinning Wheel Alley, Old Bethlem. *Mr. Ludovick Muggleton*, died Monday, March 14, 1697, in the 88th year of his age.

Whilst Mausoleums and large Inscriptions give;  
 Might, splendor and past death make potents live,  
 It is enough to briefly write thy name,  
 Succeeding times by that will read thy fame;  
 Thy deeds, thy acts, around the Globe resound,  
 No foreign soil where MUGGLETON's not found!

time opened his spiritual eyes, so that he was enabled constantly to see and converse with spirits and angels.

He now began to print and publish various wonderful things, which, he says, were revealed to him, relating to heaven and hell, the state of men after death, the worship of God, the spiritual sense of the Scriptures, the various earths in the universe, and their inhabitants, with many other extraordinary particulars, the knowledge of which was, perhaps, never pretended to by any other writer, before or since his time. Baron Swedenborg, in his treatise concerning *heaven and hell*, and of the wonderful things therein, as heard and seen by him, makes the following declaration: "As often as I conversed with angels face to face, it was in their habitations, which are like to our houses on earth, but far more beautiful and magnificent, having rooms, chambers, and apartments in great variety, as also spacious courts belonging to

This is a singular instance of the extravagance of religious madness in the followers of this now almost forgotten Prophet. I have been down to *the ground*, and no stone tells where *the Prophet* lies!

The reader is referred to Penn's Work, where will be found an epitome of the tenets of Muggleton, and a curious account of an interview between Penn and him, in which the replies of Muggleton (if we can depend upon the account) are at equal variance with common sense and common decency.

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them, together with the gardens, parterres of flowers, fields, &c. where the angels are formed into societies. They dwell in contiguous habitations, disposed after the manner of our cities, in streets, walks, and squares. I have had the privilege to walk through them, to examine all around about me, and to enter their houses, and this when I was fully awake, having my inward eyes opened." A similar description is given of *heaven* itself, but the reader is referred to the treatise whence this curious extract is taken. He denies a Trinity of *persons* in the Godhead, but contends for a divine Trinity in the single person of Jesus Christ alone, consisting of a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, just like the human trinity in every individual man, of soul, body, and proceeding operation: and he asserts, that as the latter Trinity constitutes one man, so the former Trinity constitutes one Jehovah God, who is at once the Creator, Redeemer, and Regenerator. On this and other subjects, Dr. Priestley addressed letters to the members of the *New Jerusalem Church*, to which several replies were made, and particularly one by Mr. R. Hindmarsh, a printer.

Baron Swedenborg further maintains, that the sacred Scripture contains three distinct senses, called *celestial*, *spiritual*, and *natural*, which are united by correspondences; and that in each sense it is divine truth, accommodated respectively to

the angels of the three heavens, and also to men on earth. This science of *correspondences* (it is said) had been lost for some thousands of years, viz. ever since the time of Job, but is now revived by Emanuel Swedenborg, who uses it as a key to the spiritual or internal sense of the sacred Scripture, every page of which, he says, is written by correspondences, that is, by such things in the natural world as correspond unto and signify things in the spiritual world. He denies the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice, together with the doctrines of predestination, unconditional election, justification by faith alone, the resurrection of the material body, &c. and in opposition thereto maintains, that man is possessed of free-will in spiritual things; that salvation is not attainable without repentance, that is, abstaining from evils because they are sins against God, and living a life of charity and faith, according to the commandments; that man, immediately on his decease, rises again in a spiritual body, which was inclosed in his material body, and that in this spiritual body he lives as a man to eternity, either in heaven or hell, according to the quality of his past life.

It is further maintained by Baron Swedenborg, and his followers, that all those passages in the sacred Scripture, generally supposed to signify the destruction of the world by fire, &c. commonly



called the last judgment, must be understood according to the above-mentioned science of correspondencies, which teaches, that by the end of the world, or consummation of the age, is not signified the destruction of the world, but the destruction or end of the present Christian church, both among Roman Catholics and Protestants of every description or denomination; and that the last judgment actually took place in the spiritual world in the year 1757; from which æra is dated the second advent of the Lord, and the commencement of a new Christian church, which, they say, is meant by the new heaven and new earth in the Revelation, and the New Jerusalem thence descending!

Such are the outlines of Baron Swedenborg's principal doctrines, collected from his voluminous writings. His followers are numerous in England, Germany, Sweden, &c. and also in America. They use a liturgy in their worship, which, except being much shorter, is as near to that of the Church of England as the difference of doctrines will admit.—They likewise introduce a great deal of vocal music, accompanied by the organ, and the minister's dress is exactly similar to that of the Established Church. Three places of worship are now opened in London, agreeable to this form, viz. Fryar's Street chapel, situate in Fryar's Street, Black-Friars, of which Mr. Sibly is the minister; York Street chapel, St. James's Square, of which Mr. Proud is

minister; and the New Jerusalem church in Dudley Court, Crown Street, Soho, of which Mr. Hodson is minister.—Chapels are likewise established at Birmingham, Hull, Manchester, and several other places in the country.\*

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## JOHNSONIANS.

THE *Johnsonians* are so called from the late Mr. J. Johnson, many years a respectable dissenting minister in Liverpool, and the author of various publications which contain his peculiar opinions. They do not call themselves Johnsonians, but the name is applied to them by Christians of other denominations, on account of the authority and influence which Mr. Johnson's writings have among them, and their adherence to his opinions. They must be regarded as a distinct denomination, as they will have no religious fellowship with those who dissent from their views of the gospel, which are sufficiently discriminating, and have sometimes applied to themselves the words of Balaam, respecting the children of Israel, "The people shall dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

\* Almost the whole of the above account was sent to the author for insertion by a gentleman of that denomination.

The following is a summary of their religious opinions. They deny the pre-existence of Christ, and at the same time believe that he is properly God; because all the fulness of the godhead dwells in him: consequently may be said to maintain the indwelling scheme. They assert that God cannot be divided into distinct persons: so far they agree with the Unitarians. They deny the doctrine of original sin; yet assert that no man will savingly believe the gospel, unless brought by the special influence of the spirit to receive it. They deny the natural immortality of the soul, and contend that the whole of man is at present mortal; yet maintain the separate existence of the soul between death and the resurrection. They believe that God elected Christ, and his people in him, from everlasting; that for Christ and his church all things were created; that Christ would have been manifested, his people born again and exalted to glory, though sin had never existed; that in that case the rest of mankind would all have been happy in an inferior capacity, as the servants of Christ, and his bride the church. Against the decree of sin and reprobation they are zealous. Faith they suppose to be a divine communication, the life of God in the soul. They contend that it is impossible for a real Christian to have any doubts or fears respecting his interest in Christ, or acceptance with God. Respecting the atonement and perseverance of the saints they agree with the

Calvinists, and with other Baptists as to the mode and subject of baptism. Those passages of scripture which relate to the future restoration of the Jews, they suppose to have a spiritual meaning, and deny that prophecy authorizes our expectation of their being restored to their own land. Those who die in infancy they say will be raised to life in a pure state, not to inherit the heavenly kingdom, but to inhabit the new earth, which will be formed after the conflagration, on which, they say, Christ and his church will reign a thousand years, and then be removed to some more glorious region. They contend for the restitution of all the animal creation; but believe that the wicked will be endlessly miserable. Positive punishment, as inflicted by God, they deny, and hold the language of scripture respecting the future punishment of the wicked to be figurative, and that their torment will naturally arise from their state, and exist in their minds. Such are the opinions of the Johnsonians.

They have churches in Liverpool, Norwich, Wicheam, Newark, and the neighbourhood of Halifax, and individuals of their party in many other places. Though they have no men of much learning among them, they are many of them persons of respectable character, and much in the habit of conversing together on religious subjects. Their greatest fault is their bigotry, which leads them to speak of what other parties of Christians call charity, as a noxious

weed which has grown up in the garden of God. Could they be induced to be more liberal, they would no doubt be more useful to their fellow creatures.\*

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### JOANNA SOUTHCOTT†.

“ The mission of this prophetess commenced in the year 1792, and the number of people who have joined with her from that period to the present time, as believing her to be divinely inspired, is considerable. It is asserted that she is the instrument under the direction of Christ, to announce the establishment of his kingdom on earth, as a fulfilment of all

\* The above account was sent to the author, by a gentleman who was several years a preacher among the Johnsonians, and who holds himself responsible for its accuracy and fidelity.

† The author having been frequently applied to respecting the opinions of *Joanna Southcott*, has procured from a literary gentleman who is attached to her and her cause, the above communication. The reader, therefore, may rely on its accuracy; indeed he might be referred to her numerous pamphlets, were their contents accessible to common understandings. They will be found to be a singular compound of *prose* and *verse*, or a kind of doggerel poetry! The author of the Sketch would just add, that the above is the most intelligible account of her *opinions* and *religious views* hitherto submitted to the public attention.

the promises in the Scriptures, and of that prayer which he himself gave to his followers; and more particularly of the promise made to the woman in the fall, through which the human race is to be redeemed from all the effects of it in the end. We are taught by the communication of *the Spirit of Truth* to her, that the *seven days* of the CREATION were types of the two periods in which the reign of *Satan* and of *Christ* are to be proved and contrasted; *Satan* was conditionally to have his reign tried for *six thousand years*, shadowed by the *six days* in which the Lord worked, as his spirit has striven with man while under the powers of darkness; but *Satan's* reign is to be shortened, for the sake of the elect, as declared in the gospel; and *Satan* is to have a further trial at the expiration of the thousand years, for a time equal to the number of the days shortened. At the close of the *seven thousand years* the day of judgment is to take place, and then the whole human race will collectively bring forward the testimony of the evil they suffered under the reign of *Satan*, and of the good they enjoyed under the spiritual reign of *Christ*. These two testimonies will be evidence before the whole creation of God that the pride of *Satan* was the cause of his rebellion in heaven, and that he was the root of evil upon earth; and consequently when those two great proofs have been brought forward, that part of the human race that has fallen under his power, to be tormented by

being in the society of Satan and his angels, will revolt from him in that great day, will mourn that they have been deluded, will repent, and the *Saviour* of all will hold out his hand to them in mercy; and will then prepare a *new earth* for them to work righteousness, and prepare them ultimately to join his saints, who have fought the good fight in this world, while under the reign of Satan.

“The mission of *Joanna* is to be accomplished by a perfect obedience to the spirit that directs her, and so to be made to claim the promise of *bruising the head of the serpent*; and which promise was made to the woman on her casting the blame upon Satan, whom she unwittingly obeyed, and thus man became dead to the knowledge of the good; and so he blamed his Creator for giving him the woman, who was pronounced his helpmate for good. To fulfil the attribute of justice, CHRIST took upon himself that blame, and assumed his humanity to suffer on the cross for it, that he might justly bring the cross upon Satan, and rid him from the earth, and then complete the creation of man, so as to be after his own image. It is declared that *the seed of the woman* are those who in faith shall join with her in claiming the promise made in the fall; and they are to subscribe with their hands unto the Lord, that they do thus join with her, praying for the destruction of the powers of darkness, and for the establishment of the kingdom of CHRIST. Those who thus come forward in this

spiritual war are to have the *seal* of the Lord's protection, and if they remain faithful soldiers, death and hell shall not have power over them: and these are to make up the *sealed* number of *one hundred and forty-four thousand* to stand with the Lamb on Mount Sion! The fall of Satan's kingdom will be a second deluge over the earth; so that from his having brought the human race under his power, a great part of them will fall with him; for the *Lord* will pluck out of his kingdom all that offend and do wickedly. The voice which announces the coming of the *Messiah* is accompanied with judgments, and the nations must be shaken and brought low before they will lay these things to heart. When all these things are accomplished, then *the Desire of nations* will come in glory, so that *every eye shall see him*, and he will give his kingdom to his saints!

“It is represented that in *the Bible* is recorded every event by which the Deity will work the ultimate happiness of the human race; but that the great plan is for the most part represented by types and shadows, and otherwise so wrapt up in mysteries, as to be inscrutable to human wisdom. As the Lord pronounced that man should become dead to knowledge if he ate the forbidden fruit, so the Lord must prove his words true. He therefore selected *a peculiar people*, as depositaries of the records of that knowledge; and he appeared among them, and they proved themselves dead to every knowledge of



him, by crucifying him. He will in like manner put *the wild olive* to the same test; and the result will be, that he will be now crucified in the spirit!

“The mission of Joanna began in 1792, at which time she had prophecies given her, shewing how the whole was to be accomplished. Among other things, the Lord said he should visit the surrounding nations with various calamities for fifteen years; as a warning to *this* land; and that then he should bring about events *here* which should more clearly manifest the truth of her mission, by judgment and otherwise; so that this should be *the happy nation* to be the first redeemed from its troubles, and be the instrument for awakening the rest of the world to a sense of what is coming upon all, and for destroying *the Beast*, and those who *worship his image*!”

Such is the account of the opinions of *Joanna Southcott* sent me for insertion: it may not be improper to add, that this lady has recourse to *pictures* by way of illustrating the visions with which she favours the world. She used to travel with these representations of the pencil; and they were held up by a person standing at the corner of the pulpit while she minutely explained them. The Papists, who are very partial to paintings, call them *the Books of the unlearned*; and therefore we must not wonder that they should be adopted by any sect for the diffusion of instruction amongst the multitude. There is certainly a *novelty* in this plan of teaching,

calculated to attract attention ; and though I understand that the *paintings* here used are very unfinished performances, somewhat like the good lady's poetry, yet they are thought sufficiently correct for the purposes to which they are devoted. We do not find that *Joanna Southcott* and her followers are particularly fond of music like the Swedenborgians, otherwise we might close with the observation, that this singular female is determined, so far to gratify the *popular* taste, as to call in to her aid the sister arts of painting, music, and poetry ! One of her first places of worship, at the end of the Borough, had inscribed upon it in large letters, THE HOUSE OF GOD—this could be done for no other purpose than attracting the public attention. 'Tis passing strange that *Joanna Southcott* should receive the least countenance from the well educated ministers of the Church of England.



WE shall close our list of DENOMINATIONS with an account of that discriminating article of belief, which refers to the *final triumphs of Christianity*. Its advocates are not a sect distinct from others, but their tenet prevails in a less or greater degree throughout almost every department of the religious world.

## MILLENARIANS.

THE *Millenarians* are those who believe that Christ will reign personally on earth for a thousand years; and their name, taken from the Latin, *mille*, a thousand, has a direct allusion to the duration of this spiritual empire. "The doctrine of the Millennium, or a future paradisaical state of the earth, (says a monthly reviewer) is not of Christian, but of Jewish origin. The tradition is attributed to Elijah, which fixes the duration of the world in its present imperfect condition to six thousand years, and announces the approach of a sabbath of a thousand years of universal peace and plenty, to be ushered in by the glorious advent of the Messiah! This idea may be traced in the epistle of Barnabas, and in the opinions of Papias, who knew of no written testimony in its behalf. It was adopted by the Author of the Revelations, by Justin Martyr, by Irenæus, and by a long succession of the fathers. As the theory is animating and consolatory, and, when divested of cabalistic numbers and allegorical decorations, *probable even in the eye of philosophy*, it will no doubt always retain a number of adherents\*."

\* It is remarkable, that DAVIDISM, the religion of the first inhabitants of this island, had a reference to the progressive melioration of the human species.

But as the MILLENNIUM has for these few years past attracted the attention of the public, we shall enter into a short detail of it.

Mr. Joseph Mede, Dr. Gill, Bishop Newton, and Mr. Winchester, contend for the *personal reign* of Christ on earth. To use that prelate's own words, in his *Dissertations on the Prophecies*:—"When these great events shall come to pass, of which we collect from the prophecies, this is to be the proper order:—the Protestant witnesses shall be greatly exalted, and the 1260 years of their prophesying in sackcloth, and of the tyranny of the beast, shall end together; the conversion and restoration of the Jews succeed; then follows the ruin of the Othman empire; and then the total destruction of Rome and of Antichrist. When these great events, I say, shall come to pass, then shall the kingdom of Christ commence, or the reign of the saints upon earth. So Daniel expressly informs us, that the kingdom of Christ and the saints will be raised upon the ruins of the kingdom of Antichrist, vii. 26, 27. *But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end: and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominion shall serve and obey him. So likewise St. John saith, that, upon the final destruc-*

tion of the beast and the false prophet, Rev. xx. *Satan is bound for a thousand years; and I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus Christ and for the word of God; which had not worshipped the beast neither his image; neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a THOUSAND years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.* It is, I conceive, to these great events the fall of Antichrist, the re-establishment of the Jews, and the beginning of the glorious MILLENNIUM, that the three different dates in Daniel of 1260 years, 1290 years, and 1335 years are to be referred.—And as Daniel saith, xli. 12, *Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 years;* so St. John saith, xx. 6, *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.* Blessed and happy indeed will be this period: and it is very observable, that the martyrs and confessors of Jesus, in Papist as well as Pagan times, will be raised to partake of this felicity. Then shall all those gracious promises in the Old Testament be fulfilled—of the amplitude and extent, of the peace and prosperity, of the glory and happiness of the church in the latter days. Then, in the full sense of the words, Rev. xi. 15, *Shall the kingdoms of this*

*world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.* According to tradition,\* these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the saints, will be the *seventh Millenary* of the world: for as God created the world in *six* days, and rested on the *seventh*; so the world, it is argued, will continue *six* thousand years, and the *seventh thousand* will be the great *Sabbatism*, or holy rest to the people of God. *One day* (2 Pet. iii. 8) *being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.* According to tradition too, these thousand years of the reign of Christ and the saints, are the *great day of judgment*, in the morning or beginning whereof, shall be the coming of Christ in flaming fire, and the particular judgment of Antichrist and the first resurrection; and in the *evening* or *conclusion* whereof shall be the GENERAL RESURRECTION of the dead, *small and great*; and *they shall be judged, every man, according to their works.*†”

\* See Burnet's Theory.

† Mr. Winchester, in his *Lectures on the Prophecies*, freely indulges his imagination on this curious subject. He suggests, that the large rivers in America are all on the eastern side, that the Jews may waft themselves the more easily down to the Atlantic, and then across that vast ocean to the Holy Land; that Christ will appear at the equinoxes (either March or September) when the days and nights are equal all over the globe; and finally, that the body of Christ will be luminous, and being suspended in the air over the

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This is a just representation of the *Millennium*, according to the common opinion entertained of it, that CHRIST will reign *personally* on earth during the period of *one thousand years*! But Dr. Whitby, in a *Dissertation on the subject*; Dr. Priestley, in his *Institutes of Religion*, and the Author of the *Illustrations of Prophecy*, contend against the literal interpretation of the Millennium, both as to its nature and its duration. On such a topic, however, we cannot suggest our opinions with too great a degree of modesty.

Dr. Priestley (entertaining an exalted idea of the advantages to which our nature may be destined) treats the limitation of the duration of the world to *seven thousand years* as a Rabbinnical fable; and intimates that the *thousand years* may be interpreted *prophetically*: then every day would signify a *year*, and the *Millennium* would last for *three hundred and sixty-five thousand years*! Again he supposes that there will be no resurrection of any individuals till the general resurrection; and that the *Millennium* implies only the *revival of religion*. This opinion is indeed to be found in his *Institutes*, published many years ago; but latterly he has inclined to the *personal reign of Christ*. See his *Farewell Sermon*, preached at Hackney, previous to his emi-

equator for twenty-four hours, will be seen with circumstances of peculiar glory, from pole to pole, by *all* the inhabitants of the world!

gration to America. The same conjecture as to its duration is thrown out by the Author of the *Illustrations of Prophecy*; but he contends, that in the period commonly called the *Millennium*, a melioration of the human race will gradually take place, by *natural* means, throughout the world. For his reasons, we refer to the work itself, where will be found an animated sketch of that period, when an end shall be put to many of the crimes and calamities now prevalent on the globe!

The Rev. Mr. Bicheno, of Newbury, likewise, has in his publications thrown out some curious particulars respecting the *Millennium*; and though the reader may not agree with him in many things, yet he will applaud his ingenuity. We will just add, that the late Mr. *Nathaniel Scarlett*, at the time of his decease, was preparing for the press a piece on the Millennium, entitled the *Millennial Age*; which was to contain all the passages of Scripture relative to the subject, accompanied with several admirably executed plates, by way of illustration. But his death prevented its publication.

This final article of the *MILLENNIUM* shall be closed with one observation. However the *Millenarians* may differ among themselves respecting the nature of this great event, it is agreed on all hands, that *such a revolution* will be effected in the latter days, by which *vice* and its attendant *misery*



shall be banished from the earth; thus completely forgetting all those dissensions and animosities by which the religious world has been agitated, and terminating the grand drama of Providence with **UNIVERSAL FELICITY\***.

\* The professors of Christianity have instituted *Societies* for the advancement of Religion. There are five which deserve to be mentioned: 1. *The Society for promoting Christian Knowledge*, which erects charity schools in England and Wales, and distributes Bibles, Common Prayer-Books, and religious tracts: 2. *The Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts*, which takes care that the West India Islands, and the British colonies in North America, are provided with episcopal clergymen and schoolmasters: 3. *A Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge*, designed to banish ignorance and profaneness from the Highlands and Western Islands: 4. *A Society established in Ireland, called the Incorporated Society in Dublin for promoting English Protestant Working Schools*: and 5. *A Society for distributing Bibles both at home and abroad, supported by individuals of every denomination.*

Mr. Daniel Neal, about 70 years ago, estimated the number of Dissenters in England at one hundred and fifty thousand families. At present the proportion of *Nonconformists* to the *Members of the Church of England* is supposed to be as one to five; and it is singular that the same proportion holds between the *Episcopalians* and *Roman Catholics* in Ireland.

THESE are the divisions of human opinions, which characterize the more popular departments of the religious world. I have endeavoured to delineate them with accuracy and brevity. Each system boasts of admirers, and professes to have its peculiar arguments and tendencies. To a thoughtful mind they exhibit a melancholy picture of the human understanding, misguided through passion, and warped with prejudice. In drawing out the motley catalogue, several cursory reflections arose in my mind. A few only, such as may operate as a persuasive to RELIGIOUS MODERATION, and tend also to the improvement of other Christian graces, shall be submitted to the reader's attention.

The quotations both in the Text and Notes, are introduced with the view of corroborating the sentiments inculcated in *the Reflections*—And farther illustrations will be found in the *Essay on Enthusiasm and Superstition*. Should the reader imagine that too much is said on the subject—the saying of an ancient philosopher must be recollected—*Nunquam nimis dicitur quod nondum satis dicitur*.—NEVER CAN THAT BE TOO MUCH INSISTED UPON WHICH HAS NOT YET BEEN SUFFICIENTLY LEARNT AND PRACTISED.

## REFLECTIONS.

“ May we ALL of us, in our respective stations, become more disposed to provoke one another *unto love and unto good works*, and less disposed to backbite and devour one another for our opinions—may CHRISTIANITY have its root in our hearts rather than in our heads—may it shew forth its *fruit* in the purity and integrity of our lives, rather than in the vehemence and subtlety of our disputes. In a word, may the time at length come when *every individual* in the church and out of the church, *Trinitarian and Unitarian*, may love his own *heresy* less than GOSPEL CHARITY !” *Bishop of Landaff.*

1. SINCE the best and wisest of mankind thus differ on the speculative tenets of religion, let us modestly estimate the extent of the human faculties.

A modest estimate of the human faculties is an inducement to moderation. After laborious investigations, probably with equal degrees of knowledge and integrity, men arrive at opposite conclusions. This is a necessary consequence of imperfection. Human reason, weak and fallible, soars with feeble, and often with ineffectual wing, into the regions of speculation. Let none affirm that this mode of argument begets an indifference to the acquisition and propagation of religious truth. To declare that all tenets are alike, is an affront

to the understanding. The chilling hesitation of scepticism, the forbidding sternness of bigotry, and the delirious fever of enthusiasm, are equally abhorrent from the genius of TRUE CHRISTIANITY. Truth being the conformity of our conceptions to the nature of things, we should be careful lest our conceptions be tinctured with error. Philosophers suppose that the senses convey the most determinate species of information: yet these senses, notwithstanding their acuteness, are not endued with an instinctive infallibility. How much greater cause have we to mistrust the exercise of our rational powers, which often, from early infancy, are beset with prejudices!

Our reason, however, proves of essential use to us in ascertaining the *nature* of truths, and the *degrees* of evidence with which they are severally attended. This induces a modesty of temper, which may be pronounced the ground-work of charity. *Richard Baxter*, revered for his good sense as well as fervent piety, has these REMARKABLE EXPRESSIONS on the subject:—"I am not so foolish as to pretend my certainty to be greater than it is, merely because it is dishonour to be less certain; nor will I by shame be kept from confessing those infirmities which those have as much as I, who hypocritically reproach me with them. My certainty that I am a man, is before my certainty that there is a God; my certainty that there is a God, is greater than my cer-

tainy that he requireth love and holiness of his creatures; my certainty of *this* is greater than my certainty of the life of reward and punishment hereafter; my certainty of that is greater than my certainty of the endless duration of it, and the immortality of individual souls; my certainty of the Deity is greater than my certainty of the Christian faith; my certainty of the Christian faith in its essentials, is greater than my certainty of the perfection and infallibility of all the Holy Scriptures; my certainty of that is greater than my certainty of the meaning of many particular texts, and so of the truth of many particular doctrines, or of the canonicalness of some certain books. So that you see by what gradations my understanding doth proceed, as also that *my certainty differeth as the evidence differs*. And they that have attained to a greater perfection and a higher degree of certainty than I, should pity me, and produce their *evidence* to help me." This paragraph should be written on a Tablet in letters of gold. Like the Roman laws of old, it ought to be hung up in public, and every means taken of directing towards it the attention of the Professors of Christianity. This *accurate* statement of the nature and degrees of belief *duly impressed* on the mind, would prevent an ignorant and besotted bigotry.

REASON, though imperfect, is the noblest gift of God, and upon no pretence must it be decried.

It distinguishes man from the beasts of the field, constitutes his resemblance to the Deity, and elevates him to the superiority he possesses over this lower creation. By Deists it is extolled, to the prejudice of revelation; and by Enthusiasts depreciated, that they may the more effectually impose on their votaries the absurdities of their systems. Yet, strange inconsistency! even these enthusiasts condescend to employ this calumniated faculty in pointing out the conformity of their tenets to scripture, and in fabricating evidence for their support. But beware of speaking lightly of reason, which is emphatically denominated *the eye of the soul*! Every opprobrious epithet with which the thoughtless or the designing dare to stigmatize it, vilifies the Creator. Circumscribed, indeed, are its operations, and fallible are its decisions. That it is incompetent to investigate certain subjects which our curiosity may essay to penetrate, is universally acknowledged. Its extension, therefore, beyond its assigned boundaries, has proved an ample source of error. Thus Mr. *Colliber*, an ingenious writer, (often referred to by Dr. Doddridge in his Lectures) imagines in his treatise, entitled *The Knowledge of God*, that the Deity must have *some form*, and intimates it may probably be *spherical*!! Indeed the abuse of reason has generated an endless list of paradoxes, and given birth to those monstrous systems of metaphysical theology, which are the

plague of wise men, and the idol of fools. Upon many religious topics, which have tried and tortured our understandings, the sacred writers are respectfully silent. Where they cease to inform us we should drop our enquiries; except we claim superior degrees of information, and proudly deem ourselves more competent to decide on these intricate subjects. "The modesty of Christians, (says Archbishop Tillotson) is contented in divine mysteries, to know what God has thought fit to reveal concerning them, and hath no curiosity to be wise above that which is written. It is enough to believe what God says concerning these matters, and if any man will venture to say more—every other man surely is at liberty to believe *as he sees reason*."

The primitive Christians, in some of their councils, elevated the NEW TESTAMENT on a throne; thus intimating their concern, that by that volume *alone* their disputes should be determined. The great president De Thou remarks "that the sword of the word of God ought to be the sole weapon—and those who are no longer to be compelled, should be quietly attracted by moderate considerations and amicable discussions."\*

\* "In all persuasions, the *bigots* are persecutors; the men of a cool and reasonable piety, are favourers of toleration; because BIGOTS not taking the pains to be acquainted with *the grounds* of their adversaries' tenets, com-

2. The diversity of religious opinions implies no reflection upon the sufficiency of Scripture to instruct us in matters of faith and practice, and should not, therefore be made a pretence for uncharitableness.

Controversies are frequently agitated concerning words rather than things. This is to be ascribed chiefly to the ambiguity of language, which has been a fertile source of ecclesiastical animosities. But there is not in the world such a multitude of opinions as superficial observers may imagine. A common gazer at the starry firmament conceives the stars to be innumerable; but the astronomer knows their number to be limited—nay, to be much smaller than a vulgar eye would apprehend. On the subjects of religion, many men dream rather than think—imagine rather than believe. Were the intellect of every individual awake, and preserved in vigorous exercise, similarity of sentiment would be much more prevalent. But mankind will not think, and hence *thinking* has been deemed “one of the least exerted privileges of cultivated humanity.” It unfortunately happens that the idle flights indulged

ceive them to be so absurd and monstrous, that no man of sense can give into them in good earnest. For which reason, they are convinced that some oblique bad motive induces them to pretend to the belief of such doctrines, and to the maintaining them with obstinacy. This is a very general principle in *all* religious differences, and it is the *corner-stone* of all PERSECUTIONS.” *Burke.*



by enthusiasts, the burdensome rites revered by the superstitious, and the corrupt maxims adopted by worldly-minded professors, are charged on the Scriptures of truth. Whereas the inspired volume is fraught with rational doctrines, equitable precepts, and immaculate rules of conduct. Fanciful accommodations, distorted passages, false translations, and forced analogies, have been the despicable means employed to debase the Christian doctrine. A calm and impartial investigation of the word of God raises in our minds conceptions worthy the perfections of Deity, suitable to the circumstances of mankind, and adapted to purify and exalt our nature—

- “ RELIGION'S lustre is, by native innocence,
- “ Divinely pure and simple from all arts;
- “ You daub and dress her like a common mistress—
- “ The harlot of your fancies! and by adding
- “ False beauties, which she wants not, make the world
- “ Suspect her angel face is foul beneath,
- “ And will not bear all lights!”

The Papists deprive their laity of the Scripture, by restraining its use, and denying its sufficiency. The same reason also was assigned to vindicate the necessity of an infallible head to dictate in religious matters. Notwithstanding these devices to produce unanimity of sentiment, they were not more in possession of it than the Protestants. The sects which at different periods sprang up in the bosom, and

disturbed the tranquillity of the Catholic church, are proofs that they failed to attain the desired object. Pretences, therefore, however specious, should be rejected, if they tend to invalidate the sufficiency, or disparage the excellence of holy writ. Least of all should diversity of sentiment be alledged; for it does not originate in the Scriptures themselves, but in the imbecillity of the understanding, in the freedom of the will, in the pride of passion, and in the inveteracy of prejudice. Deists, nevertheless, who are expert in observing what may be construed into an objection against revealed religion, declaim loudly on this topic. On account of the diversity of sentiment which obtains, they charge THE BIBLE with being defective in a species of intelligence it never pretended to communicate. Unincumbered with human additions, and uncontaminated with foreign mixtures, it furnishes the believer with that information which illuminates the understanding, meliorates the temper, invigorates the moral feelings, and improves the heart. *All Scripture given by inspiration, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* "Heaven and Hell are not more distant (says Lord Lyttleton), than the benevolent spirit of the Gospel and the malignant spirit of party. The most impious wars ever made were

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called *holy wars*. He who hates another man for not being a Christian is himself not a Christian. Christianity breathes love, and peace, and good will to men."\*

3. Let not any one presume to exempt himself from an attention to religion, because some of its tenets seemed involved in difficulties.

Upon articles which promote the felicity, and secure the salvation of mankind, the SCRIPTURE is clear and decisive. The curiosity of the inquisitive, and the restlessness of the ingenious, have involved some subjects of theological disquisition in obscurity. Dr. Paley, speaking of the disputes which distract the religious world, happily remarks, "that the rent has not reached the foundation." Incontrovertible are the facts upon which the fabric of natural and revealed religion is reared; and *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!* He who searches the Scriptures, must confess that they

\* The Emperor Charles the Fifth, also, we are told, retired at the close of life to a monastery, and there, says Dr. Robertson, "he was particularly curious with regard to the construction of clocks and watches, and having found, after repeated trials, that he could not bring any two of them to go *exactly alike*, he reflected, it is said, with a mixture of surprise as well as regret, on his own *folly*, in having bestowed so much time and labour, in the more vain attempt of bringing mankind to a *precise uniformity* of sentiment concerning the intricate and mysterious doctrines of religion!"

teach, in explicit terms that GOD rules over all—that man is fallen from his primeval rectitude—that the MESSIAH shed his blood for his restoration—and that in a FUTURE STATE rewards await the righteous, and punishments will be inflicted on the wicked.

From the preceding sketch of the different opinions of Christians, it appears that controversies have been chiefly agitated concerning the person of *Christ*, the subject of the *divine favour*, and the article of *church government*. But what was the specific matter of disputation? Not whether *Christ* has actually appeared on earth to introduce a new dispensation; nor whether God is disposed to shew *grace* or favour towards fallen man; nor whether the professors of religion ought to submit themselves to certain regulations, or *church government*, for mutual benefit. These are truths revered by every denomination, and the only point of contention has been, what *particular views* are to be entertained of these interesting facts. The Trinitarian, the Arian, and the Socinian, equally acknowledge the *divinity* of Christ's mission, or that he was the Messiah predicted by the ancient prophets; and the chief point of dispute is, whether this Messiah be a man highly inspired, or one of the angelic order, or a being possessed of the attributes of Deity. The Calvinist, the Arminian, and the Baxterian also, each of them firmly believes that *the grace of God hath*

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*appeared*, and differ only respecting the wideness of its extent, and the mode of its communication. Similar observations might be transferred to the subject of church government, and the administration of ceremonies. But sufficient has been said to shew that the differences subsisting between Christians do not affect the truth of Christianity, nor hazard the salvation of mankind.

Faint indeed is the light thrown by revelation on certain subjects. Yet no lover of righteousness need distress himself, whether he be mistaken in leading a life of virtue and piety. Practical religion lies within a narrow compass. The sayings of Christ embrace almost every part of human conduct, though his disciples have been lamentably deficient in paying them a proper attention. Jesus Christ assures us, that *to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, is the first and great commandment*—and that *the second is like unto it—to love our neighbour as ourselves*. They entertain mistaken views of the *glorious gospel*, who consider it inimical to the prosperity of the human race. Descending from a GOD of LOVE, and presented to us by his only begotten Son—every mind should have opened for its reception. Wrangling should have been prevented by the clearness of its fundamental doctrines, hesitation about obedience precluded by the justice of its precepts, and the beauty of its

examples should have captivated the most indifferent hearts.

The perplexity in which some religious tenets are involved, instead of alienating us from the practice of righteousness, should quicken our enquiries after truth. Indeed, upon a serious and intelligent individual, it produces this effect. Having in his eye the scripture as the only standard, he is the more alive to free enquiry, when he contemplates the diversity of religious systems; and more accurately scrutinizes their nature, examines their foundations, and ascertains their tendencies. This mode of arriving at truth is attended with advantages. Our knowledge is enlarged, our candour established, and our belief founded on the basis of conviction. Such a believer reflects an honour upon the denomination with which he connects himself. For feeling the difficulties of religious investigation, he presumes not to charge with *heresy* those of his fellow Christians who differ from him; nor is he such a stranger to the perfections of the Deity, and to the benign spirit of his religion, as to consign them over to the regions of future misery. Of Mr. Gouge, an eminent Nonconformist minister, it is thus honourably recorded by the great and good Archbishop Tillotson:—"He allowed others to differ from him even in opinions that were very dear to him, and provided men did but *fear God, and work righteousness*, he loved them heartily,

how distant soever from him in judgment about things less necessary ; in all which he is very worthy to be a pattern to men of all persuasions." And Lord Chatham has observed:—" It is said that religious sects have done great mischief, when they were not kept under restraint ; but history affords no proof that sects have ever been mischievous, when they were not oppressed and persecuted by the ruling Church."\*

4. Let us reflect with pleasure in how many important articles of belief all Christians are agreed.

Respecting the origin of evil, the nature of the human soul, the existence of an intermediate state, and the duration of future punishment, together with points of a similar kind, opinions have been, and in this imperfect state will ever continue to be, different. But on articles of faith, far more in-

\* " Were *one religion* only to exist in a Country, probably the people would soon become either indifferent about its tenets or superstitious in supporting them, and from the history of mankind, were *two systems* only of religion to prevail, zeal would be perpetually exercised to the destruction of each other, but *variety* which divides attention tends to lessen bigotry and arrest persecution—and hence seems best calculated to promote zeal without intolerance, virtue void of hypocrisy, and the general happiness of the Community." See *Hints respecting Religious Persecution*, in a Work entitled *Hints designed to promote Beneficence, Temperance, and Medical Science*, by John Coakley Lettson, M. D. L. L. D. &c.

teresting in themselves, and far more conducive to our welfare, are not all Christians united? We *all* believe in the perfections and government of one God, in the degradation of human nature through transgression, in the unspeakable efficacy of the life, death, and sufferings of Jesus Christ, in the assurance of the divine aid, in the necessity of exercising repentance and of cultivating holiness; in a resurrection from the dead, and in a future state of rewards and punishment. Cheerfully would I enter into a minute illustration of this part of the subject; but the devout and intelligent Dr. Price has discussed it, in his first sermon on the Christian Doctrine, to which discourse I refer the reader, and recommend it to his repeated perusal. Many Christians are more anxious to know wherein their brethren *differ* from them, than wherein they are agreed. This betrays a propensity to division, and bears an unfavourable aspect on mutual forbearance, one of the highest embellishments of the Christian character. An *enlightened zeal* is compatible with RELIGIOUS MODERATION, which is more particularly opposed to the furious spirit of uncharitableness, the gangrene of genuine Christianity ! From the shy and distant deportment of men of different persuasions towards each other, a stranger to them all would with difficulty be brought to believe that they looked up to the *same* God, confided in the *same* Saviour,



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and were bending their steps towards the *same* state of future happiness. The Christian world has the appearance of a subdued country, portioned out into innumerable districts, through the pride and ambition of its conquerors, and each district occupied in retarding each other's prosperity. Alas! what would the *Prince of Peace* say, were he to descend and sojourn among us! Would he not reprove our unhallowed warmth, upbraid us with our divisions, chide our unsocial tempers, and exhort to amity and concord? "This antipathy to your fellow Christians," would he say, "is not the *effect* of my religion, but proceeds from the *want* of it. My doctrines, precepts, and example, have an opposite tendency. Had you *learned of me*, you would have never uttered against your brethren terms of reproach, nor lifted up the arm of persecution. The NEW COMMANDMENT I gave unto you was—*That you love one another.*"\*

Were the professors of the Gospel once fully sensible how they coincide on the fundamental facts of natural and revealed religion, they would cherish with each other a more friendly intercourse, unite more cordially to propagate religion both at home and abroad, and a superior degree of success would

\* See an HUMBLE ATTEMPT to promote *Union and Peace* among Christians, by inculcating the Principles of Christian Liberty, by R. Wright. It is a work of an excellent tendency.

crown their combined exertions for the purpose. Much it is regretted that disputes have generally been agitated concerning unessential points, and with an acrimony diametrically opposite to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That controversy is in itself injurious to truth, no intelligent individual will insinuate. When conducted with ability and candour, light has been struck out, errors have been rectified, and information, on interesting subjects, has been communicated to the public. But alas! controversy has been perverted. To many who have engaged in theological discussion, victory, not truth, has been the object of pursuit. Seduced by unworthy motives, they swerved from the line of conduct prescribed by an apostle, and contended *boisterously*, rather than *earnestly, for the faith once delivered to the saints*. Fiery controversialists, hurried away by the impetuosity of temper, or exasperated by the opposition of an acute and pertinacious adversary, have disgraced the polemic page by ungenerous insinuations. Thus are infidels furnished with an additional objection to revealed religion—the investigation of interesting truth terminates in mutual reproaches; and Christians of different sentiments, driven still farther from each other, are the less fitted to associate together in the common mansions of the blest! To this pernicious mode of agitating disputes, there are, however, exceptions; and instances of this kind might be ad-

duced. In the defence of Christianity, and in the support of its particular doctrines, writers have stood forth, whose temper and liberality breathe the genuine spirit of the Christian Religion. DODDRIDGE'S Letters to the Author of Christianity not founded in Argument, BISHOP WATSON'S Apologies, and CAMPBELL'S Answer to Hume on Miracles, are examples of the candour with which religious controversies should be conducted. In an enlightened age like the present, this conciliating spirit was to be expected; and we indulge the pleasing hope, that times still more auspicious to truth are approaching, when the amicable discussion of every doctrine shall obtain an universal prevalence:

- “ Seize on TRUTH where'er 'tis found,
- “ Among your friends—among your foes,
- “ On *Christian*, or on *Heathen* ground;
- “ The flower's *divine* where'er it grows;
- “ Neglect the prickles and assume the rose.”

WATTS.

“ No way whatsoever,” says the immortal Locke, “ that I shall walk in against the dictates of my conscience, will ever bring me to the mansions of the blessed. I may grow rich by an art that I take no delight in—I may be cured of some disease by remedies I have no faith in; but I cannot be saved by a religion that I distrust, and a worship that I abhor. It is in vain for an unbeliever to take

up the outward shadow of another man's profession; FAITH only and SINCERITY are the things that procure acceptance with God."

TRUTH, indeed, moral and divine, flourishes only in the soil of freedom. There it shoots up and sheds its fruit for the healing of the nations! Civil and religious liberty are two of the greatest earthly blessings which Heaven can bestow on man. Thrice happy are the people who experience the benefits of good government, unburdened by oppression, and who enjoy the sweets of liberty, unembittered by licentiousness!\*

5. We should allow to others the same right of private judgment in religious matters, which we claim and exercise ourselves.

It is replied—"We forbid not the sober use of this privilege." But who can estimate the *sobriety* of another man's speculations? And by reprobating the opinions which a serious brother may happen to entertain in consequence of free investigation, we tacitly condemn that operation of his mind which induced him to take up such tenets. This is the

\* William Penn has, in a letter to Archbishop Tillotson, these memorable words—"I abhor two principles in religion, and pity them that own them—The first is obedience upon authority, without conviction; and the other, destroying them that differ from me, for God's sake. Such a religion is without judgment though not without teeth—union is best if right—else *charity*."

spirit of popery in disguise. Cautiously exercising his reason, and devoutly examining the sacred records, *let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.* This was the advice of Paul to the primitive Christians, and no substantial reason has been, or ever will be, given for its being abandoned. For a Protestant, who demands and exercises the right of private judgment, to deny it to his brother, is an unpardonable inconsistency. It is also an act of injustice, and, therefore, contrary to reason, condemned by revelation, and prejudicial to the best interests of mankind. He who insults your person, steals your property, or injures your reputation, subjects himself to the punishment which the law denounces. What then can we think of the man who attempts to rob you of the right of PRIVATE JUDGMENT—a jewel of inestimable price—a blessing of the first magnitude! Were we once to relinquish *thinking for ourselves*, and indolently to acquiesce in the representations of others, our understandings might soon groan beneath the absurdities of other men's creeds, and our attention be distracted by the perplexed nature of our religious services. Hitherto, persons have never been wanting unreasonable enough to impose on their brethren articles of faith. The late Mr. Robinson, of Cambridge, an avowed foe to ecclesiastical tyranny, has traced its sources with his usual acuteness, and pronounces them to be power, law,

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patronage, office, the abuse of learning, and mistaken piety. These pretences for domination over conscience are plausible, and by their speciousness millions have been deceived. But explain to a man of common sense the nature and foundation of religious liberty, and the infatuation ceases. He must perceive that the Father of Spirits hath authorized no man to dictate to another what he is to believe, much less to impose his dogmas under pain of eternal punishment:

“ Let Cæsar’s dues be ever paid

“ To Cæsar and his throne;

“ But consciences and souls were made

“ To be the LORD’s alone!”

WATTS.

To use the language of the illustrious *Washington*, speaking of the United States,—“ It affords edifying prospects indeed to see Christians of different denominations, dwell together in more charity, and conduct themselves in respect to each other with a more Christian-like spirit, than ever they have done in any former age!”

Dr. Prideaux (a learned clergyman of the church of England) in his *Life of Mahomet*, speaking of the dissensions of the sixth century, remarks—“ Christians having drawn the *abstrusest niceties* into controversy, did thereby so destroy *peace, love, and charity* among themselves, that they lost the *whole*

substance of religion, and in a manner drove Christianity quite out of the world; so that the Saracens, taking advantage of the weakness of power and distractions of councils, which those divisions had caused, soon over-ran with terrible devastation, all the Eastern provinces of the Roman empire; turned every where their churches into mosques, and forced on them the abominable imposture of Mahometanism."

*Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?* was the language in which Christ reproached the Pharisees; and *Prove all things*, was Paul's exhortation to the church at Thessalonica. These passages alone shew, beyond the possibility of dispute, that both Christ and Paul were patrons of free enquiry. Free enquiry in its fullest extent, has been found serviceable to the interests of religion. Hereby error ceases to be perpetuated, and truth emerges from those shades of darkness with which she has been enveloped. Survey the page of ecclesiastical history—mark the intervals of langour when the right of private judgment lay dormant—then was the church of Christ debilitated and pestered with an heterogeneous mass of errors. Excellently is it remarked in a periodical publication:—"No man can write down truth. Enquiry is to truth what friction is to the diamond. It proves its hardness, adds to its lustre, and excites new admiration." The ablest advocates for Christianity

confess, that by the attacks of its enemies provoking examination, it has been benefited. To infidel writers we are indebted for BUTLER's profound Analogy, LAW's Theory of Natural and Revealed Religion, CAMPBELL's Dissertation on Miracles, NEWTON's Work on the Prophecies, WATSON's admirable Apologies, and other performances, which reflect as much honour on the names of their respective authors, as they have rendered service to the cause they espoused. "Every species of intolerance," says Archdeacon Paley, "which enjoins suppression and silence, and every species of persecution which enforces such injunctions, is averse to the progress of truth, forasmuch as it causes *that* to be fixed by one set of men at one time, which is much better, and with much more probability of success, left to the independent and progressive enquiries of separate individuals. TRUTH results from discussion and from controversy, is investigated by the *labour* and researches of private persons; whatever therefore prohibits these, obstructs that industry and that liberty, which it is the common interest of mankind to promote."

6. Let us be careful to treat those who differ from us with kindness.

Believing those who differ from us to be the disciples of error, they have a claim on our compassion. And as a further incentive to a lenient conduct, it should be remembered, that *we differ*



*from them just as much as they do from us.* By either party, therefore, no anathema should be hurled, and a proneness to persecution should be eradicated. The Quakers, in their address to James the Second, on his accession, told him, that they understood he was no more of the established religion than themselves: "We therefore hope (say they) that thou wilt allow us that liberty which thou takest thyself." The terms *schism* and *heresy* are in the mouths of many, and it is no unfrequent case to find that those who use them most, least understand their real import. Dr. Campbell (who favoured the public with an excellent translation of the Four Gospels) thus concludes a learned dissertation on the subject: "No person (says he) who in the spirit of candour and charity adheres to that which, to the best of his judgment, is right, though in this opinion he should be mistaken, is in the scriptural sense either *schismatic* or *heretic*: and he, on the contrary, whatever sect he belongs to, is most entitled to those odious appellations who is most apt to throw the imputation upon others." Would to God, that this observation were inscribed on the front of every place of worship, and engraven on the memory of every individual in Christendom!\*

\* Having had the honour of attending the lectures both of Dr. Campbell and Dr. Gerard, at Aberdeen, in the year 1790, the author takes this opportunity of expressing his obligation for the instruction received; and particularly

Upon the advantages arising from Christian moderation we might largely expatiate, and to detail the evils which have flown from an unenlightened and furious zeal, would be to stain my page with blood. Bishop Hall, in the last century, wrote a treatise on moderation, and has discussed the subject with that ability which is peculiar to all his writings. But this great and good man, towards the close of the same treatise, forgetting the principles which he had been inculcating, devotes *one solitary page* to the cause of intolerance. This page he concludes with these remarkable expressions:—"Master Calvin did well approve himself to God's church, in bringing SERVETUS to the stake at Geneva!!!" Blessed Jesus! how art thou wounded in the house of thy friends! After this deplorable instance of human inconsistency, should not the most eminent of the followers of Christ beware, lest, by indulging even in the slightest degree a spirit of intolerance, they be insensibly led either to adopt or applaud practices which, under the specious mask of an holy zeal, outrage the first principle of humanity? To love our *own party* only,

for that *amiable spirit of candour*, which induced them fairly to state opposite opinions, never discovering the least trait of uncharitableness, which is the disgrace of Christianity. The Spanish proverb says, "To parents, to teachers, and to God all sufficient, we cannot be too grateful."

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is (to use the words of the excellent Dr. Doddridge) nothing else than *self-love* reflected. The most zealous partizans, therefore, are revelling in *self-gratification*.

And Mr. Jay of Bath, in his excellent Sermons, remarks that "the readiest way in the world to thin heaven, and replenish the regions of hell, is to call in the spirit of *bigotry*. This will immediately arraign and condemn, and execute all that do not bow down and worship the image of *our* idolatry. Possessing exclusive prerogatives, it rejects every other claim—"Stand by, I am *souder* than thou. The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!" How many of the dead has this intolerance sentenced to eternal misery, who will shine like stars in the kingdom of our Father!—how many living characters does it not reprobate as enemies to the cross of Christ, who are placing in it all their glory! No wonder, if under the influence of this *consuming* zeal, we form lessening views of the number of the saved. *I only am left*—yes, they are *few* indeed if none belong to them, who do not belong to your party—that do not see with your eyes—that do not believe election with you, or universal redemption with you—that do not worship under a steeple with you, or in a meeting with you—that are not dipped with you, or sprinkled with you! But *hereafter* we shall find that the **RIGHTEOUS** were not so circumscribed;

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when we shall see—*many coming from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven?*” Were these truly evangelical sentiments more prevalent among professors of every description, the ravages of infidelity would cease—Christians themselves become more united, and rapid advances would be thus making towards their moral and religious improvement.

Christians, indeed, of almost *every* denomination, appear at times to have forgotten, that harshness widens rather than closes the breaches which diversity of sentiment may have occasioned. Coercive measures reach not the mind, and the issuing edicts to extort assent to speculative tenets, is the bombast of civil authority. Truth rests on evidence. But what has *evidence* to do with exertions of power, implements of torture, and scenes of devastation? From the commencement of the fourth century, down to that illustrious æra of the reformation, wide and unmolested was the empire of ignorance over the human mind. At Rome, for a series of ages, the chair of infallibility was filled by a succession of intolerant and domineering pontiffs. Systems of cruelty were devised and practised, for the support of their most holy faith. Out of that once respectable capital of the world, the demon of persecution rushed forth, brandishing his torch, and deluged the church of Christ with the blood of her martyrs!

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Impatient for the destruction of the human race, he flew into different regions of the earth, framed racks, fixed stakes, erected gibbets, and, like a pestilence, scattered around him consternation and death! Shall the mild and evangelical genius of Protestantism countenance a temper which incites to such execrable deeds, and enrolls the names of the perpetrators in the calendar of the saints? In this twilight state of being, to expostulate is our province—to inveigh and persecute is forbidden. *The glorious Gospel of the blessed God* prohibits rash accusations, cruel surmises, and malignant anathemas. Had a regard been paid to the golden rule, *Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you*, intolerance would never have reared its ensanguined crest to affright the children of men. *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of*—was our Saviour's reprimand to the disciples, who, in the plenitude of their zeal, would have called down fire from heaven to consume the deluded Samaritans. Too often does a portion of this accursed spirit reign in the breasts of Protestants. Hence censures are poured forth, hatreds are engendered, and a preparation for heaven is retarded. Instead, therefore, of usurping the seat of judgment, which THE ALMIGHTY has exclusively reserved to himself, and of aiming to become the dispensers of the divine vengeance, let us wait the issue of all things in deep and reverential silence. A wise and a good God will solemnly decide the

business, when he *judges the world in righteousness*! See a *History of Persecution*, by Mr. Anthony Robinson, a work of great merit and unquestionable utility. The volume is an epitome of almost every thing that has been advanced on that tragical subject.

7. Let us not repine because perfect unanimity of religious sentiment is unattainable in this present state.

A repining spirit is the source of ill temper towards those who dissent from us; but it seems to be the intention of the Divine Being, that we should think differently concerning certain points of faith and practice. Variety marks the works of God. It is impressed throughout the circumference of the natural, the animal, and the intellectual world. Above us, we behold the dazzling brightness of the sun, the pale splendour of the moon, the mild twinkling of the stars, and the variegated colours which adorn the firmament of heaven! Around us, the surface of the earth is diversified into a thousand beautiful forms, and in the animal, the vegetable, and the fossil kingdoms, no two individual productions are perfectly alike! Within us, upon the slightest examination, we discern our minds stamped with an original peculiarity. From senseless idiotism, up to the sagacity of Newton, how numerous are the gradations of intellect! Minds are of various sizes. Their capacities, habits, and views, are never in

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strict conformity with each other. In some degree, therefore, diversity of opinion flows from the structure of our understanding. To fall out with this branch of the dispensations of God is to arraign his wisdom. Doubtless he might have shed upon us such a degree of light, that we should have seen as with one eye, and have been altogether of one mind. But the Supreme Being has otherwise ordered it, and with becoming resignation let us acquiesce in the propriety of the appointment. Lord Mansfield, that ornament of the law, declares that, "There is nothing certainly more unreasonable, more inconsistent with the rights of human nature, more contrary to the spirit and precepts of the Christian religion, more iniquitous and unjust, more impolitic, than *Persecution* ! It is against natural religion, revealed religion, and sound policy !"\*

Innumerable and unavailable have been the attempts made in the successive ages of the church to produce *unanimity of sentiment*. For this purpose legislatures have decreed acts, poured forth torrents

\* The biographer of Bishop Burnet tells us, that when making his *Tour on the Continent*, this great and good prelate "there became acquainted with the leading men of the different persuasions tolerated in that country, particularly Calvinists, Arminians, Lutherans, Baptists, Brownists, Papists, and Unitarians, amongst *each of which*, he used frequently to declare, he met with men of such *unfeigned piety and virtue*, that he became fixed in a strong principle of *universal charity*.

of blood, and perpetrated deeds at which humanity sickens, shudders, and turns away with disgust. Francis the First, king of France, used to declare, "that if he thought the blood in his arm was tainted with the *Lutheran heresy*, he would have it cut off, and that he would not spare even his own children, if they entertained sentiments contrary to the Catholic Church." Pride in one person, passion in a second, prejudice in a third, and in a fourth investigation, generates difference of opinion. Should diversity be deemed an evil, it is incumbent on rational beings, and congenial with the dignity of the Christian profession, to improve it to valuable purposes. It is a fact, that different denominations have, in every age of the church, kept a jealous eye over each other; and hereby the Scriptures, the common standard to which they appealed for the truth of their respective tenets, have been preserved in greater purity. It may also be added, that diversity of opinion quickens our enquiries after truth, and gives scope for the exercise of our charity, which in one passage of the sacred writings is pronounced *superior to faith and hope*, and in another passage termed *the bond of perfectness*. Much improvement have good men extracted from the common evils of life, by these evils giving rise to graces and virtues which otherwise, perhaps, would have had no existence; or at least, would have been faintly called forth into action. To perceive the justice of this observa-



tion, it is not necessary that we be profound contemplators of human affairs.

Under the accumulated difficulties of faith and practice, by which we are embarrassed in this sublunary state of imperfection, we should meditate on the doctrine of a Providence, which administers the richest consolation. The dominion exercised by the Supreme Being over the works of his hands, is neither partial as to its objects, narrow in its extent, nor transitory in its duration. Unlike earthly monarchs, who expire in their turn, and who are successively borne into the tombs of their ancestors, *the King of Saints liveth and reigneth for ever and ever!* Evils indeed have entered the world, and still continue to distress it. But these evils have not crept into the system unknown to its great author; and the attributes of Deity ensure their extirpation. Our rejoicing is—*the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!* Glorious, therefore, *must* be the termination of the divine dispensations. The august period is predicted in sacred writ, and lies concealed in the womb of time. Distant may be its arrival, but its blessings once realized, will compensate the exercise of your faith, and the trial of your patience:

- " One part, one little part, we dimly scan,
- " Thro' the dark medium of life's fev'rish dream,
- " Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
- " If but that little part incongruous seem;

“ Nor is that part perhaps what mortals deem :  
“ Oft from apparent ills our blessings rise—  
“ O ! then renounce that impious self-esteem,  
“ That aims to trace the secrets of the skies ;  
“ For thou art but of dust—*be humble and be wise.*”

BEATTIE.

The Dissertations of Dr. Price (especially that on Providence) are deserving of attention. An elegant little work, also, entitled *Intimations and Evidences of a Future State*, by T. Watson, (second edition) cannot fail of imparting consolation to the serious mind.

Finally—penetrated with a sense of the imperfection of this present life, let us be cautious how we form our religious sentiments, watch unremittingly over our tempers and conduct, and aspire to that better world, where *pure and unadulterated truth* shall be disclosed to our view !

Of all the subjects presented to the human mind, religion claims the first and the greatest attention. A *God, a Providence, a Saviour, and a Future State of Retribution*, ought to be pressing upon our minds, and presiding over our conduct. To familiarize ourselves with their evidences, to lay open our souls to their energy, and promote, by every *honourable* method, their spread and establishment among mankind, should be our ambition. Zeal is an elevated and an useful passion. It is forcibly and repeatedly enjoined in the sacred writing. It forms the leading

trait of excellence in the best and most enlightened characters. Indeed, an individual can scarcely be pronounced truly good, except he possesses a portion of this celestial fire. But let us be careful that our warmth be temperate and regular. Zeal, confined within the limits prescribed by reason and scripture, is attended with blessed consequences. Loosened from these restraints, like the devouring conflagration, it involves in one undistinguishable ruin the victims of its fury, and triumphs in the desolation it has effected. How different is the Christian influenced by a zeal purely *evangelical*, from the monster who is either swoln with the venom of uncharitableness, or is pregnant with persecution for conscience sake! "Mistake me not (says good Richard Baxter) I do not slight *orthodoxy*, nor jeer at the name; but only disclose the pretences of *devilish zeal* in pious or seemingly pious men. The slanders of some of these, and the bitter opprobrious speeches of others, have more effectually done the Devil's service, under the name of *orthodoxy* and zeal for truth, than the malignant scorn of godliness." Thus also the pious Matthew Henry declares, that of *all the Christian graces, ZEAL is most apt to turn sour!* Dr. Doddridge, in his *Family Expositor*, has this remark:—"Wisely did Christ silence the suspicious praises of an *unclean spirit*; and vain is all the hope which men build merely on those *orthodox professions* of the most important

truths, in which *Satan* himself could vie with them." To use the words of Gilbert West, a most worthy member of the church of England—*Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.* An appellation infinitely more honourable than that of pastor, bishop, archbishop, patriarch, cardinal, or pope; and attended with a recompence infinitely surpassing the richest revenues of the highest ecclesiastical dignity."

Indeed, the light and darkness now blended together, instead of generating a spirit of scepticism, or precipitating us into acts of violence, should impel us to look for *the NEW HEAVENS and the NEW EARTH, wherein dwelleth righteousness. What ye know not now, ye shall know hereafter*—was our Saviour's declaration to his disciples, respecting an event which occurred whilst he continued to sojourn amongst them. It is, therefore, reasonable to believe that we shall not remain ignorant of matters of superior importance, when the proper period of communicating higher degrees of information arrives. We may, however, be assured, that the Spirit of God guides all good men into necessary truth. This is a sentiment in which the wisest of mankind concur; and upon which learned divines, after their most penetrative researches, are obliged to rest. A Christian father pronounced the greatest *heresy* to be, a *WICKED LIFE*. This was also the sentiment of Wickliffe. Devoutly is it wished that those

who are clamorous about speculative tenets, would level their artillery more against the violation of the preceptive part of our religion.

The eloquent Saurin exclaims—"Why are not ecclesiastical bodies as rigid and severe against *heresies of practice* as they are against heresies of speculation? Certainly there are heresies in morality as well as in theology. Councils and synods reduce the doctrines of faith to certain propositional points, and thunder anathemas against all who refuse to subscribe them. They say, *cursed* be he who doth not believe the divinity of Christ; *cursed* be he who doth not believe hypostatical union, and the mystery of the cross; *cursed* be he who denies the inward operations of grace, and the irresistible efficacy of the Spirit. I wish they would make a few canons against MORAL HERESIES. How many are there of this kind among our people?" These observations, made by the intelligent Saurin, respecting the refugee Protestants in Holland, are applicable to the Protestants in our times. Their anathemas are directed more against error than against unrighteousness. Whereas vice is the more formidable enemy to the welfare of mankind. To the word of God, therefore, let us have recourse, and thence derive *the doctrine which is according to godliness*, pure as the light of heaven and refreshing as the dew of the morning! The Gospel of Jesus Christ, justly understood and cordially believed, enlightens the mind,

calms the troubled conscience, rectifies depraved propensities, and introduces us into the habitation of the spirits of *JUST MEN made perfect*. "Men who profess themselves (says Mr. Cowper) adepts in mathematical knowledge, in astronomy, or jurisprudence, are generally as well qualified as they would appear. The reason may be, that they are always liable to detection, should they attempt to impose on mankind—and therefore take care to be what they pretend. In RELIGION alone a *profession* is often slightly taken up and slovenly carried on, because forsooth candor and charity require us to hope the best and to judge favorably of our neighbor; and because it is easy to deceive the ignorant, who are a *great majority* upon this subject. Let a man attach himself to a particular party, *contend furiously* for what are properly called evangelical doctrines, and enlist himself under the banner of some *popular preacher*, and the business is done. Behold a *Christian*, a *Saint*, a *Phoenix*! In the mean time perhaps his heart and his temper, and even his conduct are unsanctified—possibly *less exemplary* than some *avowed Infidels*!! No matter—he can talk—he has the shibboleth of the true church—the Bible in his pocket, and—a head well stored with notions. But the *quiet, humble, modest and peevable* person, who is in his practice what the other is only in his profession; who *hates noise and therefore makes none*; who, knowing the snares

that are in the world, keeps himself as much out of it as he can, and never enters it but when duty calls, and even then *with fear and trembling*, is the CHRISTIAN that will always stand highest in the estimation of those who bring all characters to the test of *true wisdom*, and judge of the *tree by its fruit*."

But, alas! MANKIND, instead of ascertaining what is *truth*, and *how* it can best exert its influence over the several departments of conduct, are occupied in schemes of *interested ambition*, or sunk into *criminal indifference*. Upon death they seldom bestow a serious thought. Though awful in its nature, frequent in its recurrence, and alarming in its consequences, it leaves no impression. Without emotion they behold their fellow-creatures snatched from off the busy theatre of action, and driven, one after another, either by disease or accident, into *the house appointed for all living*! Upon the decease indeed of relatives and friends, they heave a sigh, utter an exclamation, shed a tear, but clothing themselves in the garments of sorrow, the tragedy is quickly over. Reassuming their former views, and laying their minds open afresh to the dominion of their passions, they return with avidity to the occupations and amusements of life. Thus proceeds the tenor of their existence on earth, till *they* also are swept away into the receptacles of the *dead*.

*Pilgrims and sojourners on earth*, we are hastening to an ETERNAL WORLD, and a few more fleeting years will place even the youngest of us before the tribunal of Heaven. Whether we can abide the awful scrutiny which shall be instituted at the last great day, "for which all other days were made," is a question of infinite importance, and intimately concerns rational and accountable creatures. Amidst the din of controversy, and the jarrings of adverse parties, the opinions of the head are often substituted for the virtues of the heart, and thus is practical religion neglected. Fleeing, therefore, those pernicious disputes, which damp our devotion, and contract our benevolence, let us cultivate the means by which our faith may be invigorated, our hope enlivened, our charity confirmed, and our affections elevated to the *things which are above, where CHRIST sitteth at the right hand of God!* The veil now thrown over this preliminary state, and concealing from our view celestial objects, shall be removed. Then bidding an adieu to prejudices which darken the understanding, irritate the temper, and deform the spirit, we shall embrace each other with perfect love, and shall be astonished at ourselves for having been on earth so addicted to unprofitable disputations, and so backward to the exercise of brotherly kindness, and of Christian charity:



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Almighty GOD! look down on thine *erring* creatures. Pity their darkness and imperfection. Direct them into *the truth as it is in Jesus*. Banish from their hearts the bitterness of censure. Cherish in their minds a spirit of moderation and love towards their fellow Christians. To their zeal add knowledge, and to their knowledge charity. Make them humble under the difficulties which adhere to their faith, and patient under the perplexities which accompany their practice. *Guide them by thy counsel*, and, through the mediation of thy Son JESUS CHRIST, *receive them into thy kingdom and glory!* AMEN.

## RECAPITULATORY SCHEDULE.

SHewing THE ORIGIN OF THE NAMES, BY WHICH THE CHIEF SECTS ARE DISTINGUISHED.

**CHRISTIANITY** is a Revelation from God by his Son Jesus Christ—consists of Doctrines, Precepts, Positive Institutions, Rewards, and Punishment—and its Evidences are, Prophecy, Miracles, Internal Characters, together with its rapid Propagation, both among Jews and Gentiles.

*Its PROFESSORS hold various opinions, and are thus denominated:*

I. According to their opinions respecting the *Person of Christ*.

**TRINITARIANS**, from the Latin word *Trinitas*, which denotes a threefold unity in the Godhead, **SABELLIANS**, from *Sabellius*, who lived in the third century, and held a *modal* or nominal Trinity, **ARIANS**, from *Arius*, a popular divine of Alexandria, who flourished about the year 313. **SOCINIANS**, from *Faustus Socinus*, who died near Cracow, in Poland, about the year 1604.

II. According to their opinions respecting the *Means and Measure of God's Favour*.

**CALVINISTS**, from *John Calvin*, a Reformer, who flourished at Geneva about 1540. **ARMINIANS**, from *James Arminius*, the disciple of Beza, who flourished about 1606. **BAXTERIANS**, from *Richard Baxter*, an eminent Puritan, who died in the year 1691. **ANTINOMIANS**, compounded of two Greek terms, *anti* against, and *nomos* the moral law.

III. According to their opinions respecting Church Government and the Administration of Ceremonies.

**PAPISTS**, from the Latin word for Pope, *Papa*, signifying a Father, and usually resided at Rome. **GREEK CHURCH**, (chiefly Russian) from their native language, which is the Greek tongue. **PROTESTANTS**, from their solemnly protesting against a decree of Charles the Fifth, 1529. **EPISCOPALIANS**, from *Episcopus*, the Latin term for Bishop, Inspector, or Overseer of a Diocese. **DISSENTERS**, from the Latin word *dissentio*, to disagree with, or dissent from any Person or Body. **PRESBYTERIANS**, from the Greek *Πρεσβυτης*, a word signifying Elder, Senior, or Presbyter.

INDEPENDENTS, from the *independency* of each Church in its own discipline or Government.  
 BAPTISTS, from the Greek verb βαπτίζω, signifying to baptize, dip, or immerse the body in water.  
 PÆDOBAPTISTS, from the Greek words Παις and Βαπτίζω, a baptizer of infants, by sprinkling or immersion.  
 SCOTCH CHURCH, or KIRK more usually called, established in Scotland, by means of John Knox, died 1572.  
 SECEDERS, Scotch Dissenters from the Latin *secedo*, signifying to withdraw from any Body.

### MISCELLANEOUS SECTS.

#### CALL'D

QUAKERS, from the agitation or quaking with which their first preachers addressed their auditors.  
 METHODISTS, from the *methodical* strictness of their religious conduct, began at Oxford.  
 JUMPERS, from the act of *jumping* used in their religious services, chiefly in the Principality.  
 MORAVIANS, from *Moravia*, the country whence they first arose, a part of Germany.  
 UNIVERSALISTS, from the belief that *all* men will in a future state be *finally* happy.  
 SANDEMANIANS, from Robert Sandeman, a popular writer among them in Scotland.  
 SABBATARIANS, from their observance of the *Jewish Sabbath*, or seventh day, much reduced.  
 HUTCHINSONIANS, from John Hutchinson, born in Yorkshire, in the year 1674, nearly extinct.  
 MUGGLETONIANS, from John Muggleton, who lived in the days of Cromwell, almost extinct.  
 MYSTICS, from μυστικός, a Greek word importing a *secret* mysterious meaning, found in most Sects.  
 SHAKERS, from the act of *Shaking* used in their public worship.  
 SWEDENBORGIAN, from Emanuel Swedenborg, a foreigner, who died in London, during the year 1772.  
 JOHNSONIANS, from the name of the founder, who had many followers at Liverpool.  
 MILLENARIANS, from the Latin *millē*, a thousand, the years of Christ's future reign upon Earth.

A NEW COMMANDMENT GIVE I UNIO YOU—THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

JESUS CHRIST.

## BRIEF TABLE

*Of the leading Events of ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY,  
from the Birth of CHRIST down to the present  
Times, the importance of which can only be  
ascertained by studying the history of the Christian  
Church.*

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### A. D.

- 1 JESUS CHRIST born in Judea, now called the Holy Land, the World being *four thousand* years old.
- 8 Our Saviour disputes with the Jewish doctors.
- 26 John the Baptist enters on his ministry.
- 29 CHRIST is baptized by John the Baptist in the river Jordan, preparatory to his entering on his ministry.
- 33 He is crucified under PONTIUS PILATE, rises from the dead on the third day, and six weeks after ascends up into heaven, with the solemn assurance of his appearing a *second* time at the end of the world.
- 35 The miraculous conversion of the apostle Paul.
- 39 St. Matthew writes his gospel.
- 44 St. Mark writes his gospel.
- 52 Council of the apostles at Jerusalem.
- 62 St. Paul sent in bonds to Rome.
- 64 The *first* persecution against the Christians.
- 66 The Jewish war begins.
- 67 St. Peter and St. Paul put to death.
- 70 Jerusalem utterly destroyed by the Romans.
- 95 The *second* persecution against the Christians.
- 99 St. John dies in the 102d year of his age.
- 102 Pliny the Younger sends Trajan his celebrated account of the Christians.
- 107 The *third* persecution against the Christians.
- 118 The *fourth* persecution against the Christians.
- 130 Adrian rebuilds Jerusalem.
- 135 Conclusion of the Jewish war.

- 202 The *fifth* persecution against the Christians.
- 235 The *sixth* persecution against the Christians.
- 250 The *seventh* persecution against the Christians.
- 257 The *eighth* persecution against the Christians.
- 272 The *ninth* persecution against the Christians.
- 303 The *tenth* persecution against the Christians.
- After this series of persecutions Christianity becomes the established religion of the Roman empire—for
- 311 Constantine was converted to the religion of Christ, and Heathenism is every where abolished.
- 325 The first general council at Nice.
- 343 Persecution of the Christians in Persia.
- 449 The Saxons arrive in Britain.
- 476 The Western Empire finishes.
- 480 Ten *horns* or kingdoms founded out of the Romish empire, and subject to the Pope.
- 496 Clovis baptized, and Christianity embraced in France.
- 516 The computing of time by the Christian era introduced by Dionysius.
- 597 Augustine the Monk arrives in England.
- 606 Bishop of Rome constituted universal head of the church.
- 622 Mahomet establishes his religion.
- 637 Jerusalem taken by the Saracens.
- 698 The Picts in England embrace Christianity.
- 748 The computing of years from the birth of Christ began to be used in histories about this time.
- 756 The popes become civil lords in Italy, whence they gradually claimed dominion over all the earth.
- 800 The German empire founded by Charlemagne.
- 878 Alfred founds the University of Oxford.
- 915 The University of Cambridge founded.
- 1054 Leo IX. the first pope that kept an army.
- 1065 Jerusalem taken by the Turks from the Saracens.

- 1066 The conquest of England under William, Duke of Normandy.
- 1096 The first crusade to Palestine begun under several Christian princes, to drive the Infidels or Unbelievers from the Holy Land.
- 1110 Learning revived at the University of Cambridge.
- 1147 The second crusade.
- 1177 Saladin repulsed before Jerusalem.
- 1178 The Albigenses take their rise.
- 1189 The kings of England and France go to the Holy Land.
- 1192 Richard Cœur de Lion defeats Saladin at Ascalon.
- 1215 Magna Charta signed by King John.
- 1233 The inquisition trusted to the Dominicans.
- 1283 Wales conquered by Edward the First.
- 1369 John Wickliffe began to teach in England.
- 1414 The council of Constance.
- 1415 John Huss and Jerome of Prague, seized, tried, and burnt for their opinions.
- 1510 John Calvin born.
- 1517 Martin Luther writes against indulgences in Germany, which was the origin of the Reformation.
- 1519 Zuinglius began the Reformation in Switzerland.
- 1529 A diet at Spire, in Germany; the protesting against which gave rise to the appellation *Protestant*.
- 1533 Henry VIII. withdraws his allegiance from the pope, and proclaims himself supreme head of the Church of England.
- 1545 The council of Trent begins.
- 1553 Michael Servetus burnt by the instigation of Calvin, at Geneva, for the denial of the Trinity!
- 1572 The massacre of Bartholomew at Paris, when upwards of 70,000 Protestants perished!
- 1582 Pope Gregory introduces the new stile.
- 1588 The destruction of the Spanish Armada, whose object was to re-establish popery throughout England.

- 1598 Henry IV. passes the Edict of Nantz in favour of the Protestants.
- 1618 The synod of Dort begins.
- 1621 The civil war with the Hugonots in France.
- 1649 King Charles beheaded.
- 1659 Oliver Cromwell died.
- 1660 The Restoration of Charles the Second.
- 1662 Bartholomew Act, or *Act of Uniformity*, passed, by which 2000 ministers were ejected from the Church of England.
- 1685 The revocation of the Edict of Nantz, by which the exercise of the Protestant religion was prohibited in France.
- 1688 The revolution of KING WILLIAM, when the family of the Stuarts were banished for attempting to introduce Popery and arbitrary power into England.
- 1691 The battle of the Boyne in Ireland, when King William defeated James the Second, and established the Protestant religion.
- 1709 Dr. Sacheverel tried and suspended for High Churchism.
- 1715 Suppression of a rebellion in Scotland, when the Pretender attempted to recover the throne of these kingdoms.
- 1722 Bishop Atterbury banished for supporting the Pretender.
- 1722 Yong Tching, Emperor of China, banished the Jesuits and other Popish missionaries, and imprisoned those of his subjects that refused to renounce Christianity.
- 1733 The Jesuits expelled from Paraguay, in South America.
- 1746 Suppression of the rebellion in Scotland, the object of which was, by the return of the Stuart family, to restore arbitrary power and Papacy in these kingdom.

- 
- 1757 Damien, a religious fanatic, attempts to assassinate the French king.
- 1763 The Jesuits expelled France, for their intrigues against the state.
- 1766 The Jesuits expelled from Bohemia and Denmark.
- 1767 The Jesuits expelled from Spain, Venice, and Genoa.
- 1768 The Jesuits expelled Naples, Malta, and Parma.
- 1773 The society of the Jesuits suppressed by the Pope.
- 1775 American war commences with Great Britain.
- 1779 The Protestant Dissenters in England relieved from certain grievances under which they laboured.
- 1780 Riots in London, occasioned by the extension of civil rights to the Papists.
- 1783 The termination of the American war, by which the United States became independent of Great Britain.
- 1789 French revolution commences, by which both church and state were overturned and annihilated.
- 1791, Riots at Birmingham, in which the houses and property of Dissenters were destroyed.
- 1793 Lewis XVI., king of France, beheaded.
- 1794 Missions established by the Calvinists, both of the Church of England and amongst the Dissenters, with the view of converting the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands, and other remote parts of the Earth.
- 1798 Pope Pius VI. dethroned by the French at Rome.
- 1806 Bonaparte assembles the Jews at Paris for civil purposes, though at the time it was thought by some that he meant to restore them to the Promised Land.



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